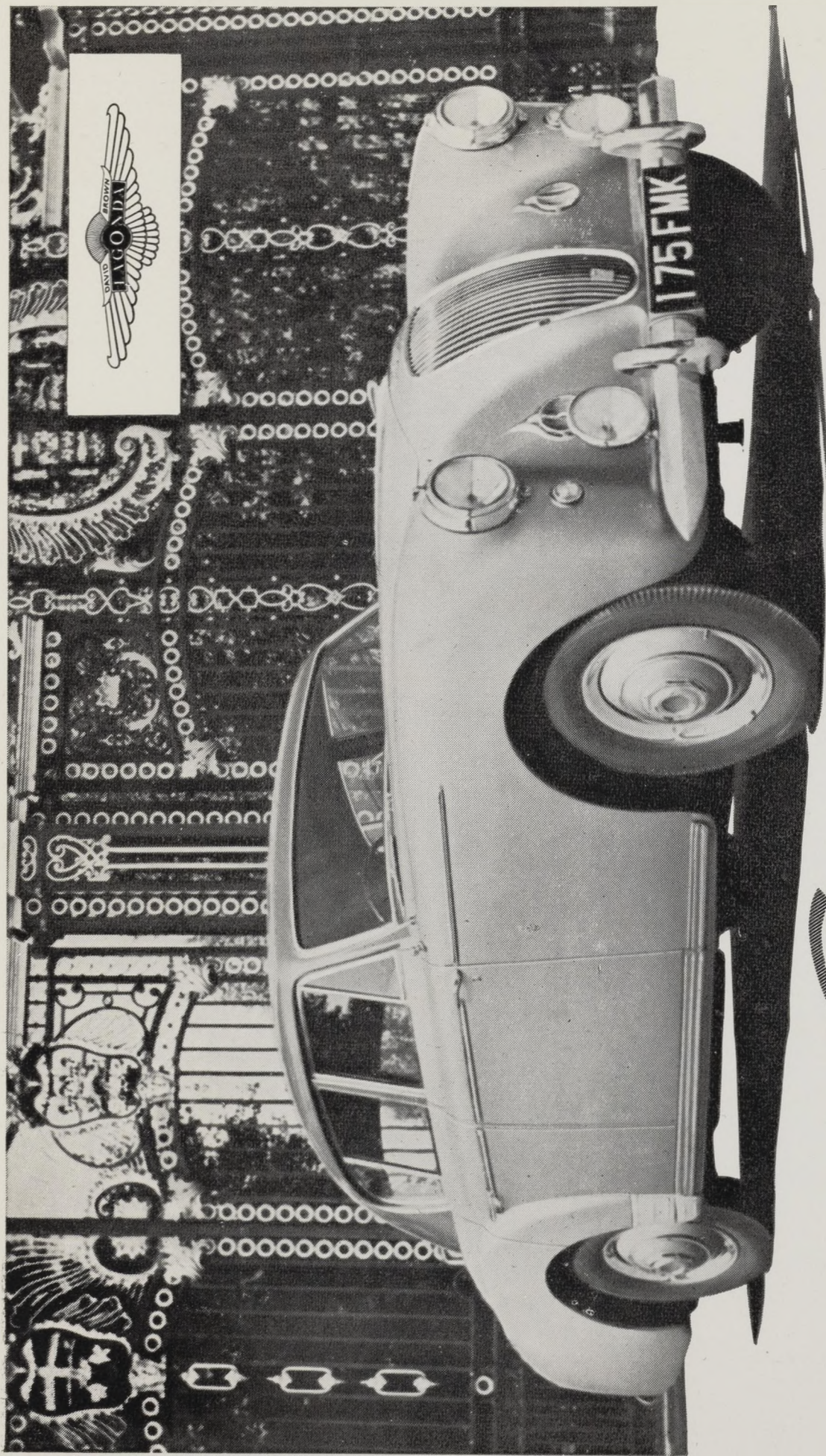


No. 30

Christmas, 1958





The designer's flair, the engineer's science,  
the craftsman's art... all, in due and just proportion find  
their true expression in this beautiful car.

THE ILLUSTRIOUS

*Lagonda*

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# THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

*Contributions do not necessarily represent the views of the Committee nor of the Editor, and expressed opinions are personal to contributors*

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## EDITORIAL

There is an old Chinese saying—"When addressing a cripple it is advisable not to talk about feet"—which has some bearing on this "Christmas" issue. In order to conserve space, please refer to the Spring, 1958 editorial which adequately sums up the recent position. Very sorry again, but—

To return to an old topic, what is it that these old Lagondas have got that no other, possibly more infernal, contraptions seem to have? It can't just be the smell, although heaven knows that's bad enough. No, it's something quite different, and it was discovered by chance by a member engaged in research into the antedecal progenitation of livestock.

Apparently, this member (who not unnaturally wishes to remain anonymous) happened upon a 16th century Spanish manuscript which described the importation of English stock into Spain, and particularly one outstanding animal called La Gōn da Staiñes. This beast seems to have enjoyed every possible vice and to have set back breeding in Spain for more than 100 years. It was currently believed to harbour an extraordinarily evil spirit under the direct supervision of the Devil himself, which was never satisfactorily exorcised. There is no direct translation of "Gon", but the meaning may fairly be conveyed by the contemporary expression "goon".

The animal in question was a pig.

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## THE COVER PICTURE

The joys of a night rally. The "Scarlet Woman" airs its owners.

which incorporates The Lagonda Car Club and The Lagonda 2-litre Register, aims to bring together owners of these fine cars for the exchange of knowledge and technical information, to provide help, and to organise social and sporting meetings.

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# Club List

Many members have not yet confirmed details of their cars. Should this apply to you please find your pen **Now**— and give details of the following:

Name .....

Address.....

.....

.....

.....

Year .....

Model .....

Type of body.....

Then find an envelope and stamp and send this to R. P. F. Hare, 137, Broxholm Road, London, S.E.27

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

MICHAEL PARKER, the Duke of Edinburgh's ex-secretary, took his friend the Baroness Hoyningen Huene (formerly Miss Nancy Oakes) for a spin in a vintage Lagonda car yesterday.

It stalled in Cowes High-street.

Women shoppers crowded round, fascinated, while red-faced Parker took several minutes to get the thing going again.

From the "Daily Mirror."

JACK ALLISON died very suddenly before Christmas. He was for many years a very keen supporter of all Lagonda affairs in the North, and could always be seen marshalling or competing in events in that area. His enthusiasm and help will be much missed by The Northern Section and The Club as a whole, and our deepest sympathy is with his family.

DONALD OVERY'S V.12 Special is now motoring in chassis form and will shortly be fitted with a special twelve branch exhaust system—by Servais, of course! There is some talk of the Editor designing the new body, but those who have seen Rexford-Welch's replica-bodied 1908 Itala may feel that a younger man is required. The Overy's now have three Lagondas, a Rotavator and the biggest cat in Hertfordshire—can anybody beat this?

MIKE WILBY has bought an M.45 and sold the Rapier. Now we shall see—even if he can't!

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description**

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## NEWS AND REPORTS

S. J. SHARPE reports a cowardly non-stop tip-and-run attack on his poor L.G.45 which now suffers from crimped wing. Should any Suffolk members see any out-of-line shooting-brake with a short length of Lag wing embedded in the offside, would they please let him know so that he can let them have the remainder. Letters will be forwarded.

HARRY THOMPSON writes from Sierra Leone to say they have the ideal hill climb at Fourah Bay College. It consists of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles of private road rising 1,100 feet from Freetown, average one in five (steepest one in three) plus two wonderful hairpin bends but nothing to stop you going over the edge and taking a short cut to Town. It proves a bit heavy for his Rover 90 as he averages at least five trips up and down per day. If someone cares to loan him a V.12 for a year he will be pleased to report on how Lagonda gearboxes stand up to it. Incidentally he is prepared to swop his 1955 Rover 90 at 30,000 miles for a short chassis V.12.

THE TREASURER wishes to acknowledge the receipt of a considerable number of cheques to bring members' bankers' order subs. up to the current rate. He regrets that he has not had time to acknowledge these individually. Reminder to pay subs.



## CLUB FIGURES

### No. 8

*Gerry Fisher-White*

*"Aw—Shurrup!"*

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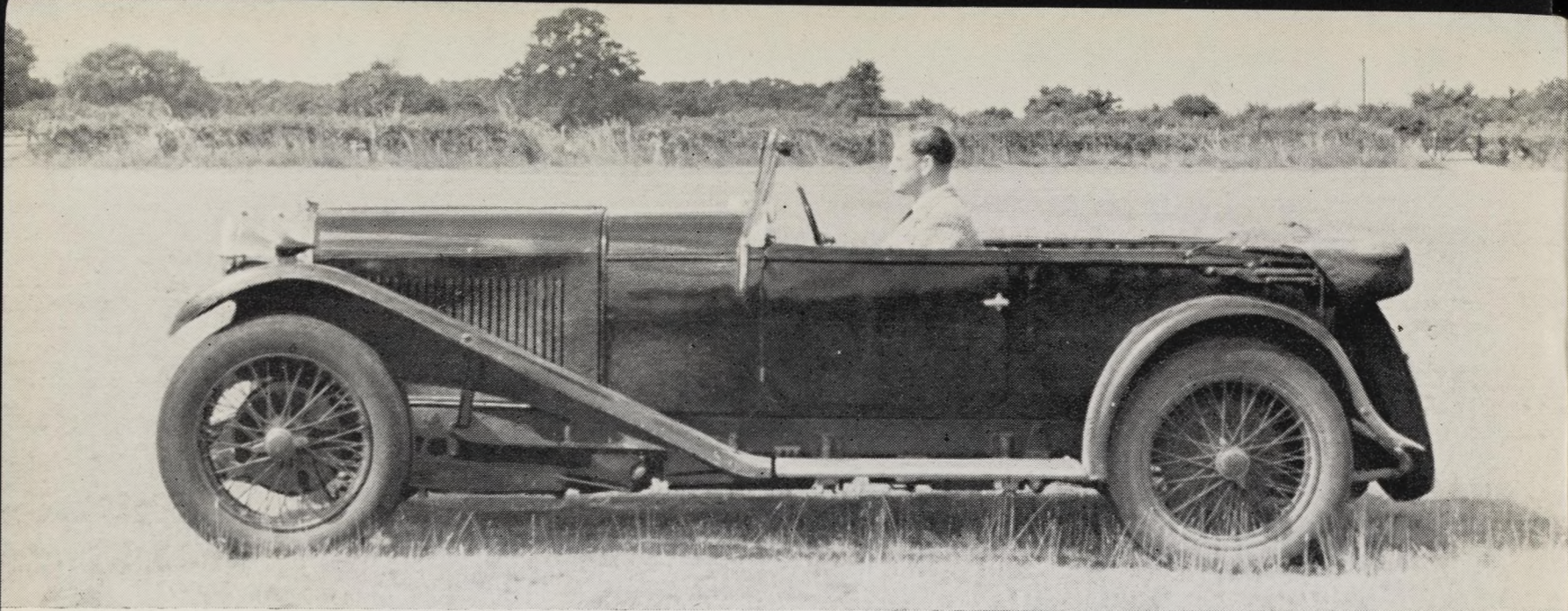
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*Henry Coates and GF1954*

# LAGONDA LOG *by Henry Coates*

My initiation to motorised self-propulsion was at the wheel of the family Model "T". The succeeding Fiat 12 entailed painful re-adjustment of habits, due mainly to the need for using the feet for processes for which one had become accustomed to use the hands. Also vice versa. A small and unexpected windfall eventually enabled me to achieve independence in personal transport. I make no apology that the dream had always been Bentley. It was a decent and healthy dream in a young man in the early thirties. Bentleys were fine cars, and they were news—sad news just then because of the firm giving up, but Le Mans was still fresh in the memory.

The convenient knowledgeable friend, however, deemed that the available funds were not sufficient to purchase a reliable Bentley, and suggested a Lagonda or an Alvis. The latter had the wrong sort of wheels—one used a wheel brace to take them off—so the Lagonda had it. Early in 1934 therefore, I had the gratification—still tempered by regrets of Bentley—of going to London to look at the machine my friend considered appropriate for me.

## **First Two Litre**

The first impression was magnificent. Beautifully clean, a taut look, twinkling hub caps—most impressive. The driver was from J. H. Bartlett, not so young but adequately keen-eyed, and the run, with 60 registering along a street full of L.G.O.C. buses (and in third too) completed the captivation. £135 the poorer, I set sail for home. Despite, or perhaps because of, a couple of years on the Fiat, I could not change down—just could not. Of course I was used to something that almost had heart failure at over 30 in third and I was revving up too much, but the whole situation—grand new car and London—was

too much for me to settle down and sort the thing out. Every time that traffic entailed too great a reduction of speed, I had to stop and start all over again—funny that later changing UP became less certain than down. To add to the complication there was another lever, and one could dip the lights by mistake instead of re-adjusting the gear ratios.

The journey had its disappointments. Despite the embarrassment of the gear box, and previous resolutions, 70 came up quite nicely—and quite often—but it made the thing boil. I did manage to change down, on the rise towards Welwyn, but only after several definite refusals of the cogs to engage. When forward motion had almost ceased the gear slipped in, so sweetly, into bottom! The gate was different from that of the Fiat. My Mother solved the boiling problem—with washing soda—and the gears got less pigheaded, and I began to realise that it was all very well worth while. Looking back the car must have been in good shape, as well it might at barely 6 years old, though it was then considered incredibly ancient. I drove it flat out all the time, and no doubt due to the thinner population on the roads, managed to avoid calamity. It was a high chassis 2-litre, '28 model, green and black, registered YV6639 and I kept it for 18 months. Those were the days when a decent 2-litre would hold its own pretty well amongst normal traffic, in fact be faster than most. Large Americans could accelerate quicker, and at times, on certain hills, there did not seem quite the right gear available—after being baulked one could pick up very nicely on second, but third was just too far away to take over decently.

Pennies being scarce on the farm, and my Father suggesting that I should turn my bent for motor cars to profit, I tried selling the things. Selling any sort

of car in a generally hard-up world was too difficult for me. The picture of myself flinging open bonnets of expensive and glamorous machinery and discoursing fluently on rockers, etc. proved a mirage. One starts by selling bread and butter stuff to folks whose only interest is what one would give for their horrible old one. Still it was an interesting experience. I lodged with a corsetry expert, had improper proposals made by a male customer of the garage, and developed a taste for beer.

Returning somewhat chastened, to agriculture, I regained mobility by spending £14 10s. at Pride and Clark on an Austin 7. This brought me North at great speed and 45 m.p.g. On the way I gallantly stopped to assist a lady, apparently overcome with despair over a violently leaking radiator. It was not, however, the radiator! I gained, and still retain a great respect for the aluminium Chummy. It taught me, among other things, that it is better to connect the leads to the right plugs. It still reminds me that if a gentle engine has not much to pull, the performance can be quite lively. But, pennies or no, I wanted another Lagonda.

### Second Two Litre

By November the convenient friend had found a Lagonda, so again to London, this time with Austin plugs firing in correct sequence. I was shown, and bought CXT104. As before, but red mudguards and 1929. Also telecontrols and ribbed brake drums. It was not quite the same somehow. The steering was heavy and lifeless, and phenomenal revs were required to achieve 50 on third. However it was a Lag, and other things seemed sound. A good go with the grease gun sorted out the steering, and it always remained good. The gear box proved to have wide ratios. The registration letters (1936) and a "Douane" seal suggested that the car had spent its early life abroad, and the low indirects were to help it up the Alps. A breaker eventually provided another box for £1 (nudge Ivan!). Second gear was bust, but I was able to use the constant mesh gears and my 60 in third.

At this time, I had no thoughts of competition motoring, only wanting to get myself and appropriate friends about at great speed, and occasionally be suitably mounted in the car park at Donnington. I never therefore, sought greater performance than was built in at Staines. I was mustard with the grease gun and feeler gauge though! Increasing oil consumption, and chronic lack of currency, started my investigations into the insides. The first venture, with Wellworthies, increased the consumption considerably. A wedding at Bromley, Kent, with taxi duty afterwards in the West End in a cloud of smoke, was probably instructive to the beholders, but to lose two plugs following a horse rally through the Rotherhithe tunnel was more than instructive to myself—always a bit claustrophobic anyway. There were not enough holes bored in the long-suffering pistons, but another fiddle made the rings work well for almost exactly 10,000 miles. This

carried us into the war—against the Germans, etc.—nothing to do with the Lag. To the normal hack and trailer work was added that of fire tender. We were not in quite the right area for fires, but we lost a lot of sleep until someone worked out a rota system. Many miles were covered with numerous temporary firemen inside and a magnificent pump behind.

### Third Two Litre

The 10,000 miles coming up and all compression vanishing, almost overnight, something had to be done. I had for a long time hankered for a low chassis model, and an opportune advertisement of V. W. Derrington caught my eye. At Kingston I met GF1954. With that number one would have to find a lot of faults before rejecting it. It had faults—there were no lamps, it was tatty—but there were some tyres, it sounded nice, and the price of £52 10s. included fitting a new hood, so I bought it. Some non-standard lamps were fitted—and some non-coupon petrol put in the tank, and I had a good run home. That car really did go well. There was a trace of smoke, and compression was not fierce, but it was beautifully smooth and very lively. When later the engine was dismantled, all the rings were stuck in the grooves, so probably the performance was due to lack of friction.

The transport officer of a unit in the area took a fancy to CXT. Whether for personal use or to help the war effort I was not clear, but he was in such a hurry to take over that I was unable to remove the telecontrols and a few other useful fittings.

The first misfortune with GF was when the fibre timing gear stripped some miles from home. A convenient pub provided homely and comfortable hospitality, meantime Lagonda Motors acted on my telegram and sent a new gear. It was only now that I found that GF was one of the few that were getting along with a sprocket less than usual—the gear was "wrong" hand. Telephoning elicited the fact that Lagondas had not a correct one, but would do something, so I went home by several trains and buses. GF and a heavy trailer load, including a hive of bees, was left in the care of the pub. Stupidly I had not taken home the old gear, or made a note of which hand it was, because I did all the bus and train business again with another cog to find that that would not fit either. Eventually the correct one was found, the car and somewhat restive bees retrieved, and GF settled into the routine, changed



only in that it was now amateur soldiers instead of firemen.

The cycle front mudguards broke stays, and acetylene welding repairs did not last long. Some fixed mudguards from an Austin, of all things, were wished into place. The effect was not too bad, and they kept the mud down and the side lamps up quite adequately. Compression becoming increasingly diffident, I bought, unseen, another engine. It proved to be a standard High Chassis one, and was from the car at Rochdale that had been fitted with a Humber engine. It would turn over, I had been told, but the starting handle had bent in making it do so, and a rocker had broken rather than overpersuade a rusted valve. I took it to pieces—and put it together again. Hoping to be able to get the original engine decently done up, I was economical enough to do the bare minimum on the Rochdale engine, which consisted of freeing rings, valves etc. and replacing only the scrapers, and a couple of compression rings that I had bust. The very oval shaft had to do, and the bores were very rusty, though not pitted and not very worn. With only an extension to the starting handle, this dropped easily into the car. Lagonda Motors rather frightened me with their quotation for an overhaul, and I found no-one locally that I could trust prepared to do anything for me. Also, I was not yet brave enough to tackle anything very drastic on a 'good' engine, so the old Rochdale engine was still functioning in 1945.

A further Derrington advertisement led me to a blower chassis, complete except for the blower. Ideas for a dashing two-seater seemed difficult to implement after a quotation for £300 to construct the body, so the engine was tried in GF. A supercharger had not seemed very appropriate for day to day motoring, but an inspection of the beginnings of my heap of bits gave me the idea of constructing another vehicle that would serve as a hack, and save the tidy car some indignities. (Of this vehicle more anon, but it allowed me to think of supercharging). The original GF engine was sold, the blower engine came out of the car, and the Rochdale put in for another spell of duty. The blower engine was reconditioned throughout, and a Zoller 5 supercharger, that I had found (? Ed.), fitted. The blower engine was eventually fitted into GF, along with the correct cross bars, and also the Z gear box from the blower chassis. (The more obvious way would have been to fit the body to that chassis, but I had discovered a nasty crack in the frame) I could not at first sort out the lubrication of the Zoller, and until Hibbert came to the rescue with advice and the necessary bits, it was far too much or nothing. Having sorted out that one, and given the new pistons time to get used to their bores, I began to appreciate the performance. It was quite a revelation, as also was the smoothness.

At about this time Densham wrote about the 2-litre Register, while I had already joined V.S.C.C. and a local club, and a few mild adventures began to happen. A Vintage rally at Piercebridge (on Tees) and the Lag A.G.M. at Brimpton the following day

(1947) entailed a grand Sunday morning dash from the former to the latter, as a final fling before petrol, and competition, became available once more.

The interim allowed me to do something about the fabric body-covering which was coming off. I committed myself by giving a good pull which brought off a lot more. (It was an early low chassis, by the way, with the body stopping at the chassis, the latter being camouflaged with louvred valances). The doors were very shallow, and the cut-away horizontal, and both these features were more inconvenient than on the high chassis cars I had been using—somehow the body seemed to have been sat on, as well as the springs and axles. The screen was also too low for me, and I only avoided a permanent stoop by selling the car! The other bothers I got over by rebuilding the near side with one very wide deep door, and lowering the cut away. The latter was not for effect—previously the side was too near the wheel and with a glove and heavy coat it was difficult to reach the gear lever. The original aluminium was used, with additional pieces, to cover the body, fixed with innumerable screws, and stones of stopper to smooth it all off. I lost the rear door, and the passenger seat was made to fold to allow access to the rear seats. Folding at the wrong moment, it wrecked what I had hoped would develop into a beautiful friendship.

Unluckily, I think now, I became gear ratio conscious, or perhaps heavy axle conscious. I worried that all the new power would be too much for the light axle, although my blower chassis also had a light axle. Sheer curiosity had driven me to decipher the figures on the pinion housing, and I was horrified to read 10-44. I immediately swapped to the other axle which was 10-42, and worried Ivan Forshaw until he produced a heavy axle. This had the surprising ratio of 10-53 and bolt on hubs, but it was 'heavy'. Ron Barker, now of the Autocar, sold me the 10-41 C.W. & P which I desired. This was all very nice—impossible to bust—but the performance lost its edge. Funnily enough, it did also bust! A half shaft gave up, fortunately almost at home. It was a little unhealthy looking when I put it in, and I had done some pretty severe motoring in trials. Road tests usually quoted a ratio of 4.1 to 1, but the "Motor" said 4.4 to 1.

The first Vintage trial was certainly thought provoking. I had read of the exploits of W. M. Couper, T. C. Mann, etc. and rather thought we might surprise someone. It was not us that delivered the surprise! A bottom gear of about 13 : 1 with  $5.25 \times 21$  tyres full of wind, and a moderate c.c.-weight ratio, proved great pride reducers. Subsequently, when steep hills and re-starts seemed likely to be in the programme, the wide ratio gear box from the van was borrowed, and some  $7.00 \times 17$  wheels fitted behind, with the blocks removed to keep some clearance. The tyres were very supple white wall affairs, that I had worn smooth on the van. They would stay on with less than 10 lb. of wind, and adhesion was capital. With these and a starting ratio that gave the engine a chance, quite



*The third Two Litre in the V.S.C.C. 1949 "Nidderdale"*

*Photo by ANNING*

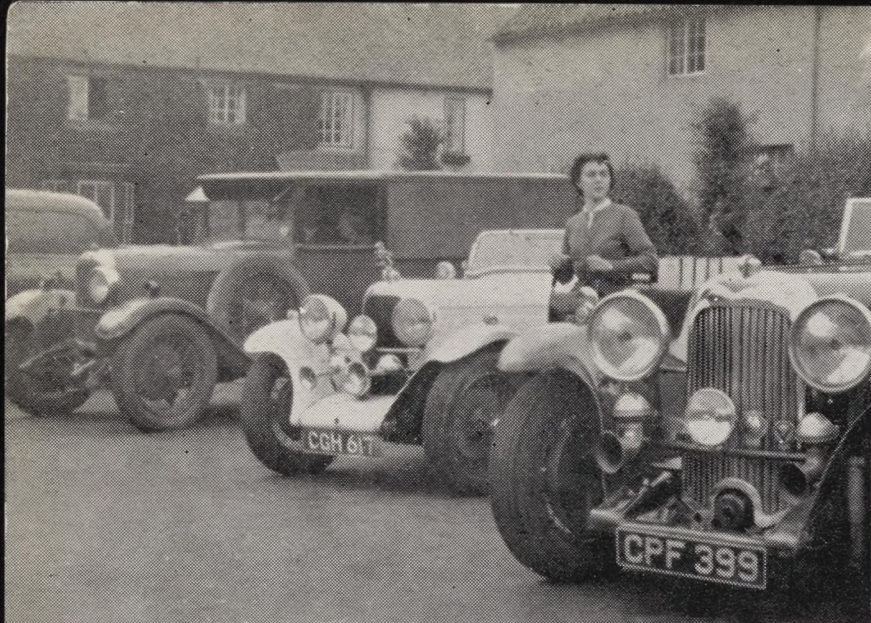
some fun was had by all for a year or two. The blower was losing blow somewhat, and on one event power was very short and was contributed to by some misguided attempts to better the carburetter setting. The rotor went so far as to seize up on one occasion. Fortunately Hibbert was following and transported the personnel to the "Bull 'i Thorn", and while they dined, Bosworth, Rees and I think others, very kindly went out and collected the machinery. Next morning the offending parts were removed, the spindle holes sealed with corks from the bar, and we returned home in no ungraceful manner. Barimar re-instated the rotor, meantime GF motored very happily drawing mixture through an empty Zoller casing—happily until a slight back fire disturbed the bottom cork and it fell into the drive.—The cork should be assembled so that it will withstand both blow and suck! Later I attended an A.G.M. in this form and did the 200 miles at 40 m.p.h.

### **3/2 Litre**

The supercharger not being all that effective, despite Barimar's attentions, I was arranging car-

buretters etc., to run unblown until I had sorted something out, when I found only  $1\frac{1}{2}$  compressions—the starting had been so certain that the handle had not been used for ages. Investigation brought to light an engine full of bronze filings and a gudgeon boss short.

This seemed an opportunity to try an idea I had been playing with for some time. I had come into possession of a 3-litre engine, and thought it would make a compact car if fitted into a 2-litre frame. It could and did. I used the spare frame, now repaired, and borrowed the body and some of the bits from G.F. The thing was registered LBT74. It was a rush job. I had done nothing to the 1928 72 m.m. bore engine beyond holding a perfunctory roll call of essential bits. It was run for the first time on a Thursday evening. On the Saturday I had planned a 200 mile jaunt with a friend—female and rather nice. Seven times in 20 miles I stopped to joggle the relief valve, as oil pressure was very shy—to the extent of complete retirement a mile or so after each joggle. Finally I deposited the friend—f. & r.n.—in a cafe and went to work in the adjacent garage. This time



### *The Two Litre Van*

I tried the input side, and found the suction filter full of fluff—not the best place to carry fluff in a Lagonda. The 200 miles was performed with no further anxiety about oil.

This machine did rather surprise people at a Welsh Rally (V.S.C.C.) There was plenty of power low down, so gradients and re-starts were no problem, even with close ratio gears. The chassis was a bit lax, partly because I had cut into the front cross member and not adequately reinforced it, and the steering not what it should have been. I think the experiment worth while, and was planning to develop the hybrid, but a character wrote and suggested that some member might like to buy a Rapide.

### **M45R**

It has not proved a particularly cheap car, and would have been expensive if I had not by now overcome my diffidence at investigating the more intimate details. BPK743 has quite a history. It was first owned by one A. E. Dobell, who drove in several of the more desperate rallies of the day. It was prepared at Staines for the Monte of 1935, in which there was some unspecified hitch and the car did not get through from Stavanger. The next year, and again from Stavanger, it finished the road section "clean". It also took the award for open large cars in the comfort competition. A Monte Carlo miniature plaque was on the dash reading 1938—I am not quite sure whether this is authentic. Dobell also entered more than one R.A.C. rally, and reports mention his dashing driving in the tests. I believe in the same car. I am told by H. Overstall, who once owned the car, and who knows J. E. Davies well, that it was frequently at Staines making good after Dobell's adventures. The man from whom I bought it had a reputation as a buster of cars, and I must admit to getting worked up a bit in tests, so it probably does well still to be a motor car at all!

As I bought it, the car had deeply valanced wings—aluminium behind, a tank holding some 40 gallons, and a 3.6 to 1 axle. The body is panelled in aluminium. The boot—infinitiesimal, due to the encroachment of the petrol tank—was very shaky, and the mud-

guards insecure. A horrible noise sometimes greeted one on taking up the drive. At first I put this down to the free wheel, but in due course drive failed completely. With the greatest good fortune this happened within yards of a garage, but on holiday in Devonshire. Hoping that Forshaw was at home, and plentifully supplied with half shafts etc., I helped the garage to lay bare the axle. We had not far to look. The spider revolved free on the pinion shaft. The Woodruff key had gone and it had been driving protestingly on the jagged remains of the taper. A new key and an extra washer got us home. The radiator leaked, and was breaking up, but I managed to convert the core of an M 45 rad to fit, and it is only now beginning to be tiresome again. The M 45 also supplied front mudguards, which, with new rear ones, were fitted professionally. The spare wheel brackets were loose, one also broken, and as the two spare wheels up front seemed high and wide, and I thought looked too ponderous, I fitted one to a completely new and thoroughly re-inforced boot lid. The arrow head extensions to the bonnet boards are still there, as is the red badge on the radiator and the 40 gallon tank.

Virtually everything has had to be done to the engine, and now it is nice, but needs some craftiness to the carbs. The gearbox was always virtually silent on all but bottom gear. Oil was being lost very fast past the front bearings. A new seal was effective for a couple of thousand miles only. A bit of re-alignment of gear box to engine effected a complete cure. Recently vibration behind the engine developed. I suspected the prop shaft, but replacement of the shaky end did no good, so I have dispensed with the free wheel, which was a horrid mess and could, I think, have been running askew. It seems to have done the trick. The gearbox was rebuilt into a non-free wheel case, with new bearings, which seem to have altered the mesh a trifle, as there is now a small whine—I think it should go off in time. The clutch seems a little prone to slipping—maybe due to my efforts in tests.

Performance was magnificent—still is, but I am used to it, and other cars have got faster in the six years I have had it. The steering is very quick—a very long drop arm seems different from that on other Rapides I have seen—and tiresomely heavy for parking, but first-rate when moving decently. Despite the weight the car is remarkably nimble. The original Luvax were ineffective, and someone had purloined the telecontrols. I now have Hartfords all round, backed up by large Armstrong's in front, and some elderly and not very large Houdaille behind. These were on the van for years, and I found they still had a lot of bite, so fitted them to the Rapide, and they are very helpful. I seem to have arrived at a combination that gives a decent ride, yet holds the thing down quite well.

### **First 16/80**

Two 16-80's have spent a little time with me. The first was a late model, with a most luxurious body. I felt I was old enough to affect the dignity

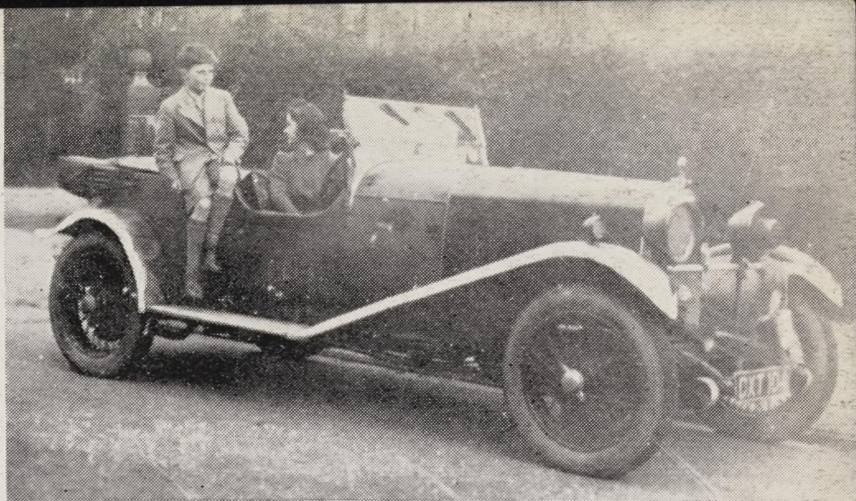
of a car with a permanent roof, also the thing looked lonely and unhappy getting wet in its field. It had also got rather wet behind the panels and a lot of the timber was rotten. The steel panels themselves were pretty hopeless, so I lost heart, and sold it at a small loss—always buy a car in daylight!

### Second 16/80

The second was an early saloon GG9134. It had been around for some time, and was in fact the Allison brothers first venture into Lagondas. They had done it up very thoroughly inside and out. The subsequent owner drove it rather too well and bisected a connecting rod. I bought it complete with hole. Having come by a Crossley engine I was able to replace the rod, and stuffed the bits of crankcase back with plenty of Loy. The second time on the road was to the marshals' dinner. It steered and handled beautifully. The engine did its stuff very well too, but was not very quiet, and of course the body amplified the gearbox noises nicely.

### The Van

The van deserves a mention. The bits that comprised the first edition were:—the ex-blower chassis, an old type gearbox with wide ratios—(ex CXT), a high front axle from a 16-65 (T. D. A. Kennedy got the engine) and a home brewed covered wagon sort of body. Later it was rebuilt on to a 14-60 chassis, which gave more body space. The front of a Sunbeam saloon was incorporated as cab. The old Rochdale engine went in just as it was from GF. After about three years I decided it was time the crank was round in the appropriate places, and had it made so, professionally. The bores were not too bad, so the old pistons went back. In assembly they reversed the gasket and wondered why it would only fire on two cylinders—if they had continued to rev up the exhaust would probably have burst a way out, but I arrived to collect, and had to wait while



*The Second Two Litre*

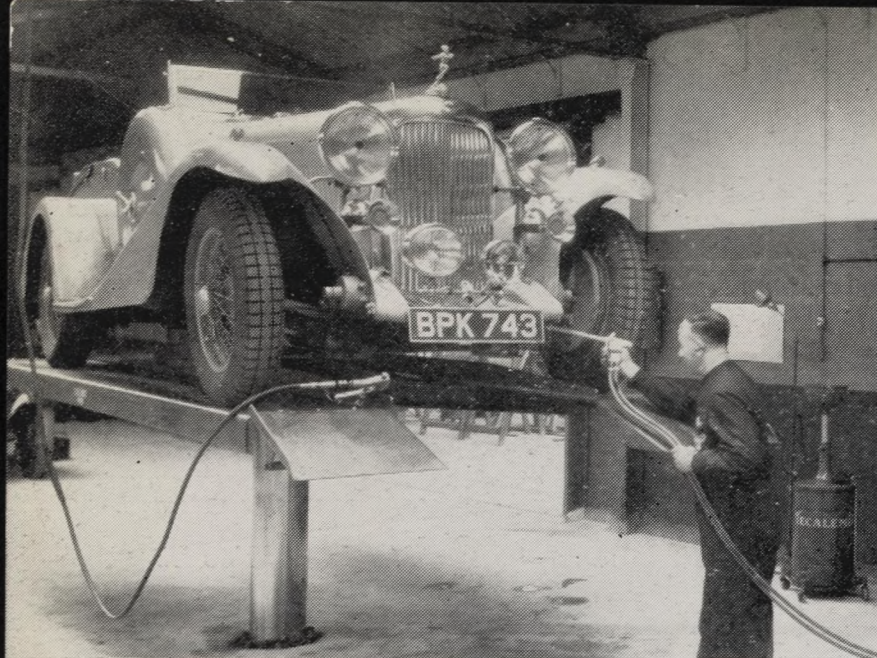
the head was taken off. I was rather pleased with that bit of diagnosis.

Later I got wind of a 2-litre chassis in Cumberland. A friend wanted something of the sort, so we went to collect. He sat on a seat tied to the bare chassis for 150 miles behind the Rapide. He then did not want the chassis. However, I did because it was an early 14-60 and from the condition of shackle pins etc., could only have done a low mileage. I transferred the van body to this (not a word to the licence dept.!) The engine proved not up to the rest, and having stupidly sold the other engine—which, by the way, went into a tourer—I had nothing to replace it. The mudguards were not pretty and were inclined to fall off, and I suddenly got tired of the whole thing, and dismantled it. Now of course I miss it greatly, but the bits are in good hands and may yet reappear as parts of the Pape Special.

This machine was at everyone's beck and call for almost ten years. It also did some long trips. Twice to Carlisle to collect most of a 3-litre, once in the snow to Knutsford, and several times to Bawtry. When the 3-litre engine was part of the cargo, two of us considered we had done well to get it in without mechanical assistance. It lay on its side just inside

*The M45R in the Service Department at the Lagonda Works*





*M45R on the ramp in the Lagonda Company's Service Department*

the tail board. At various times, axles ratios 5, 4.4, 4.2, 4.1 and 3.6 were used, the changes being to liberate the one in use because someone wanted it. The Rochdale engine was in my possession for 13 years. It propelled GF for several years, the van many more, and was lent to someone else for three months. No phenomenal mileage each year, but in almost constant use for short journeys. The same pistons were in all the time, and when I sold it, it was not a heavy smoker, and still boasted compressions.

#### **LG45 Saloon**

As the years go by one becomes more sensitive to aural and physical disturbances. Performance at the cost of clonking chains and inflexible springs, no longer satisfies the Aldington Brothers. The first whisperings of this desire to cosset the person were there with the first 16-80. A vast Darracq with foot thick cushions was a tentative feeler towards luxury, though this again was sold before being motored. A temporary hack, to do some of what the van had done, was a 15 Daimler. Here was luxury all right, but at the cost of a very poor driving position. Just now I have really found something—in a drive at Bridlington, and likely to be scrapped because it was in the way—CKX183 an L.G.45 saloon. The price? What I got for the Daimler and a gearbox! Here *is* luxury. Not only deep soft seats, but leg room, and support—no craning to see out, no reaching for controls, no sliding about. Of course, there are things the matter. I have had a short drive, on one mag and 5 plugs only. It is quiet, smooth, steers beautifully, and even stops—when asked to.

It had never seemed possible to own two 4½'s concurrently, even if it was wise. It has become possible only because of the circumstances of their purchase. It is, indubitably not wise, because both are potentially respectable motor cars—too respectable for some of my transport needs—I'm afraid the pigs will just have to get used to the idea of walking.

#### **Peroration**

It would have been educational to have owned more of other makes. Transport of some form has always been a necessity. Pre-war the 2-litre had the accommodation and strength I needed, and was economical as to tax and insurance. I looked at such things as Delage, Ballot and Sunbeam in the same sort of power and quality class. They were all beautifully made, sometimes verging on the exotic but almost always fell short in the matter of driver comfort. Since the war, and getting involved in the Club, Lagondas have become perhaps a habit, but it is difficult to think of anything else that would provide what I want in my price range. In the period of manufacture of the cars I have owned there must have been someone at Staines, who really knew what a driving position should be. I wonder if many other makes have been so consistently good in that respect. GF only suffered a little from perhaps too enthusiastic efforts at lowering in an early batch of low chassis models. Handling always seemed first rate, performance in relation to weight of the cars and size of engine was I think good. Workmanship was of course magnificent.

The 2 litre is probably the one that commands the greatest affection. The engine is so beautifully put together, withal so robust. It can, too, be really quiet and smooth, and given enough oil and not undue hammering, will stay so for a very long time. The trouble starts when a small modern overtakes and three rude children make faces at the old "racer" they have passed. Remember your 2-litre is probably 30 years old—30 years before that it was only the powerful few that could do much more than the then legal limit, flat out. One of the charms of my 2-litre van, was that I had all the qualities of the 2-litre, handling, feel, smoothness—yes, even with oval journals—and no-one jeered at me if I did not want to cruise at more than 45 or so. It would do that very comfortably, only I had to watch the mirrors because I was of course subject to a 30 m.p.h. limit.

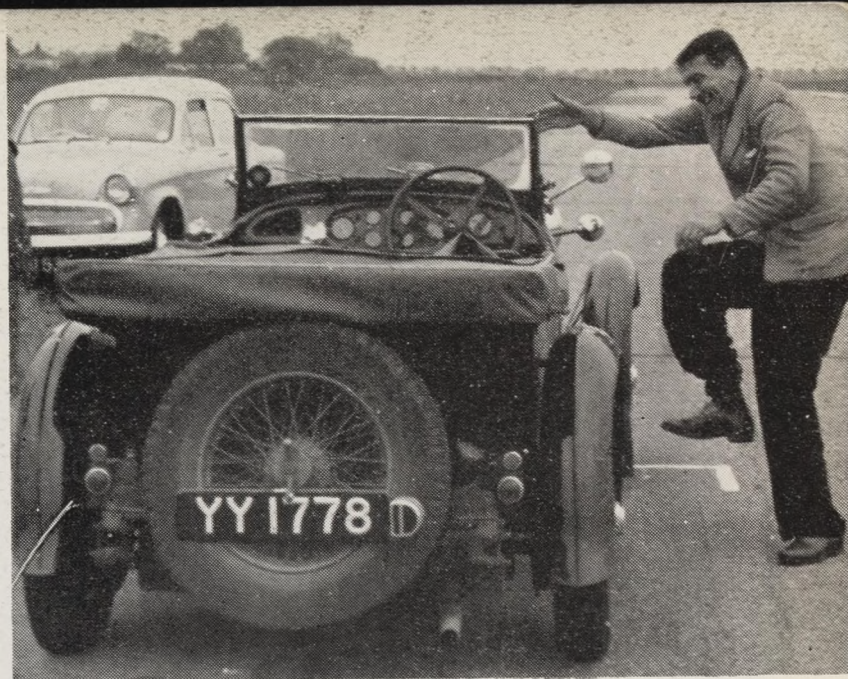
I did not give the 16-80 a fair chance. If I had taken the trouble to quieten the machinery it would have been a very pleasant motor car. Mine went really well, was comfortable and handled very nicely.

For fine easy performance the 4½ is the thing. I like the Girling brakes. They are simple and if the expanders are kept free, stop the car very nicely. It is probably not a good idea for the king pin to emerge inside the brake as the linings don't like grease. The cap usually holds, but has to have a good washer and be tight to be safe—a silly little hexagon to tighten it with. My own gearbox is nice and quiet and lovely to use. Several third gear casualties I have heard of, make me think that the engagement puts odd stresses, particular if hasty clutch-stop upward changes are practiced regularly. A pity that fashion or financial expedience necessitated the fitting of a detachable radiator shell. I have not found out yet enough about the L.G.45 to hold decided opinions. It certainly promises to be quieter

than the Rapide, and smoother, but whether due to something inside the works, or because there is more padding between the works and me, I would not be sure. I am glad it has an aluminium body much kinder to new and proud owners than rusted steel.

Do I still wish I had a Bentley? Of course I do. Apart from the glamour and magic of the name, they did go, the steering was very good, if heavy, and there was a nice gearbox, but at my price, they were noisy mechanically (the drive to the cam shaft, I understand), and the bodies were disappointing. Somehow one had to fish for the gear lever among one's legs. The components were all very robust but were they maybe a trifle heavy for the chassis they were attached to? The design was of course several years earlier than the Lagonda.

Staines has done me very well. Do I thank Wilbur Gunn, Brig. Gen. Metcalf, or Bert Hammond? All three, I expect, and several more!



"—see me dance the Polka!" Harry Gostling and Continental Two Litre (Photo: DICK PAGE)

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## WHY I BOUGHT A LAGONDA <sup>by</sup> A. J. Read

My interest in Lagondas began when my son acquired the Malcolm Campbell Rapier and at the time, I must say I felt convinced he had purchased a load of trouble. Fortunately my fears proved groundless and since then I have found myself taking a keen interest generally in the "Lags". Last year I disposed of my 1948 saloon and decided to look around the car market for a small car that presented no parking problems but had all the advantages of a larger car.

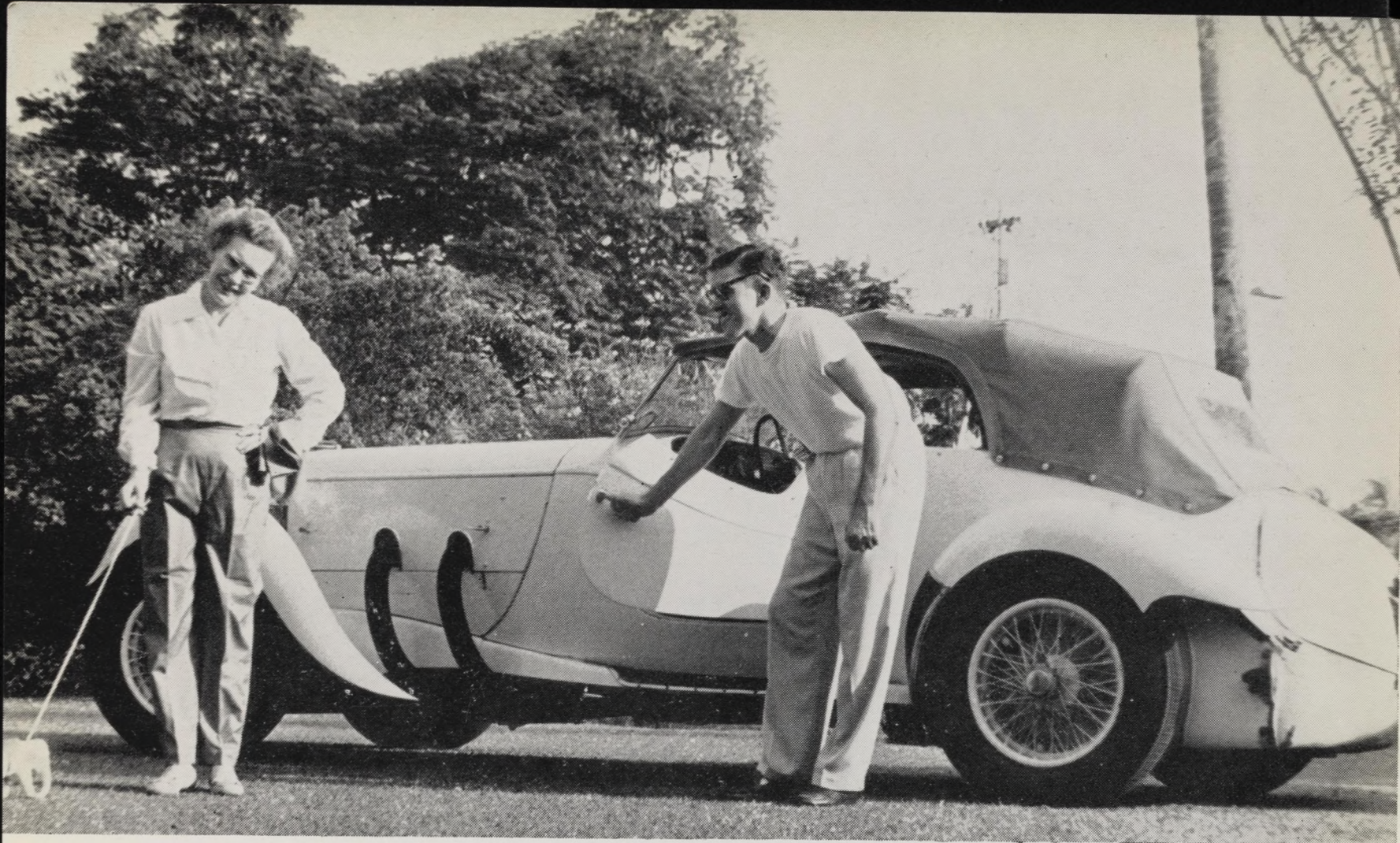
A week or two passed during which time I inspected several models of small cars and I became convinced there was no small modern car which "Had everything". Truth to tell my wife was against this small car idea of mine so actually I was on a bad wicket. I had also discussed this car problem with my son, who at the time was at Cambridge, and he suggested I should give consideration to the acquisition of a car of character. Actually I did not give this suggestion much thought as I felt such a car would call for a lot more mechanical knowledge than I possessed. However, out of the blue one morning, I received a

letter from him saying he had seen THE car for me—a Lagonda M45—and was bringing it down for my inspection the following Saturday. Needless to say my wife "Fell" for the car as soon as she saw it—and that is why I bought a Lagonda!

Previous to becoming a Lagonda owner my motoring activities had extended over a period of thirty odd years during which time I must confess I was quite satisfied with the knowledge that car wheels turned but now in my old age, I find myself anxious to learn what makes them turn and what to do when they don't!—(See Correspondence page 30—Ed.)

*A. J. Read's M45 Saloon*





*The "Quacks" with two-tone elephant*

## REPORT FROM MALAYA by "Quack"

You, too, can have a body like mine—

If that's really what you're after.

The autumn of 1957 found Quack doubly mobile, with both M45 and LG45 Rapide on the road at the same time. This enabled him to recall his wife from the United Kingdom. Symonds returned from leave about the same time, with 16/80, ex Crocker, (too small for owner?) and spare, brand new, 3-litre, to join stable already housing 1912 Daimler and HRG. The two latter live outdoors to get Lags under cover. Needham returned from leave too, with Amilcar equipped with normal, 3:1 compression head, and spare, high compression, one, 5:1. Also the same number of daughters he set out with, for a change. Which is why Jupe, with 1937 Rolls Bentley, has been elevated to the peerage.

The M45, mechanically standard, had by now grown a stark open four seater body, reducing weight by a good 4 cwt. It seems quicker than the Rapide up to 50 or so, and always seems to steer a little bit better as well, possibly because the front end of the frame has an extra stiffening cross member, and doesn't weave like the LG45 does. The Lagonda vacuum servo brakes have always been found preferable to the later Girlings, in that they are more

powerful and easier to adjust. There is always the snag of course, that really major engine failure could be awkward. No suckage, no brakes. The M45 is described by fond owner as the Ultimate in Slink, and by unfeeling nogginists as the most monstrous piece of slabsided blacksmithery they've seen in years. Quack decides, looking carefully in daylight, mabe Valspar shouldn't be applied in the dark. It rarely looks quite as good on morning after.

Rapide now has compression ratio of 7.6:1, and extra leaf in front springs, to stop paint burning off wings on twisty bits. Improvement is manifest in Perak Motor Club's Simpang Pulai hill climb,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile, 39.9 secs. Class winner XK140, 35.6, FTD hotted TR3, 34.05. Unfeeling nogginists maintain this is just as Rapide a time as last year, but are silenced next month by the car's 32.8 m.p.g. (American?—Ed.) on club economy run, done by taking as navigator Phantom I owner who can't afford economy runs, and keeping revs on 1,500 regardless.

This economy run ended with a delightful beach barbecue, eaten off plates borrowed from Hotel Majestique, which must be back same night in time for dinner. Seventy odd plates are therefore piled on Rapides' back seat, the better to get them back

before anybody else. Exhausted navigator asleep in front, we breeze along in blazing sun, palm trees curtseying in the backwash of our passing, caked in sweaty dust and at peace with the world. The Indian gentleman cycling down this side road has certainly seen us, but not until he wobbles doggedly across the road, slap under Rapide's filler cap, does Quack realise that he is on his way home from the toddy shop. There is but one thing for it—take to the tall timber. Quack's navigator awakes to find Rapide going sideways through the rubber trees, plates cascading over the side in a clamorous stream, and hasn't been the same man since. Walking back intent on a word with the cycling gentleman, we had the wind taken completely out of our sails when he tearfully shook all our hands, and got down to picking up the pieces for us. The car was undamaged, but the crocks weren't, wiping out the weekend's profits and putting all subsequent Perak barbecues on a bring-your-own-eating-irons basis.

Came one Sunday morning with both Lags running and no pending list chalked on the wall; Quack celebrated this unprecedented occasion by going out to work. Setting out in the M45, he got as far as the little tin mining town of Siputeh, where the flexible pipe to oil radiator burst, causing rapid disappearance of oil pressure and equally rapid disappearance of fierce gendarmerie on next road block at sight of large motor car bearing down on them trailing billows of white cmoke. Nothing daunted, Quack telephoned for reserve Rover 90, and bashed on, only to have his admirable aplomb and perpetual poise vanish like the service manager's smile twenty miles later, when the engine bearers broke and the engine fell out. Crawling ultimatel home in time for upstage pre-lunch plonk party, he lost much sympathy by appearing with oily eyebrows and sinking somebody else's beer.

The next bright idea was a hill climb at Tapah, fifty miles to the south of Ipoh. The authorities down there had heard little enough of the Club to greet this proposition with acclaim, though enough to throw open to us their charming club, in the sure expectation that their liquid assets would be sensibly reduced and their material position markedly improved. The big snag here was the Tapah water supply pipe, which bordered the course, a public road smartly closed for the occasion. (The East is truly wonderful). However, the pipe was heavily insured by an underwriting member who wanted to try out his Healey based Scotch Tape Special, and equally heavily sandbagged. In the event, the pipe was undamaged, though nicely hurdled by two ingenious types at the only unbagged place, both disappearing down the gully on the other side, detaching the course doctor from his favourite occupation, and keeping the recovery gang up all night.

On this occasion, the M45 was on best behaviour, getting up this twisty half mile in 52.6, taking two points off a 4½ Bentley which was nearly two seconds slower. FTD was put up by an XK120 in 46.6. On the strength of this performance, the M45 was

flogged off to Peter Todd, hitherto addicted to an XK140 coupe; Peter has since been inducted into the right club, though it is believed he had gone so far as to put a windscreen on the M45.

By this time, leave was approaching fast, and with it the prospect of removing these aged bones from Malaya for all time. This is great sadness, but when you catch yourself thinking in Malay, the time has undoubtedly come. Other worries crop up too, like What to Do with Those Useful Spares and what about the ex Jupe 2-litre and the ex-Lake M45 both lying ownerless in Singapore. This latter problem was delightfully solved by Henry, who lives on palm oil in the middle of Johore, sustained by a Bentley 3-litre and a Rolls 20. "Not to worry" writes Henry, "one of my assistants has bought the 2-litre, and my other assistant has bought the M45". Being Henry's assistant is patently no sinecure, but both must have found solace since they joined this Club.

Pursuant to a summer's larking in U.K., Quack nobly sent off the Rapide in April, to be sure it would be there in time. H.M. Customs—aren't they members?—basely impound it for six weeks while they argue about Purchase Tax. Maybe they think it's Italian. Quack, however, won this toss, and Happy Joe, delivery driver, rushes down to docks day before Quack arrives and presses button. Unhappily, exhaust valves have stuck, and now have handful of bent pushrods as well as everything else. Hardly dare appear in public these days, but maybe people will speak to us again next year, when Rapide is out and about again.

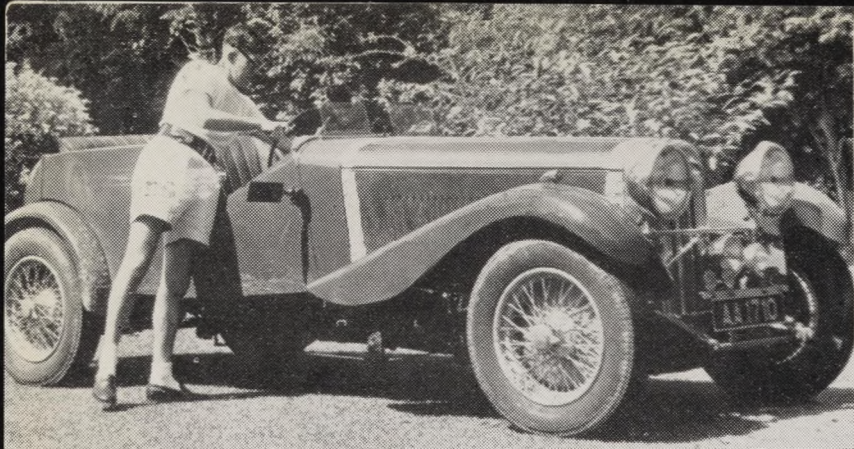
Let us end on a happy note: Quack, arriving on these shores with wife and thirty five cases of whatnot, is apprehensive no little at probable reaction of the gaugers. They, however, discovering that the first five cases contain nothing but old spanners and spare bits of Lagonda, are noticeably disconcerted and get rid of Quack with averted eye and all possible despatch.

Wife says anyone carrying all that junk around is obviously round the bend and hasn't the sense to smuggle anything anyway.

QUACK.



*The ex-Joung, ex Jupe Two Litre*



"You too, can have a body like mine—" "Quack"  
and M45 (Socks by St. Michael)

## REPORT from MALAYA

by Ron Armstrong

With the departure from these shores of "Quack's" Rapide, the Lagonda population of this Country lost its most eminent member.

However, this sad state of affairs has recently been rectified by the importation by the writer of an L.G.45 D.H.C. A few brief notes on this subject might be of interest to readers.

After parting with £135 for sea freight plus a further £20 for "incidentals"—Dock Charges, Insurance etc. etc., I was determined to make sure that no unfortunate "mishaps" occurred at the port of arrival—Port Swettenham, so my wife and I arranged to be on the Dockside to meet the old lady.

We went aboard the ship and sought out the Chief Officer to ascertain the whereabouts of the car. "Oh, you're the owner of the old Bentley in No. 1 Hold?" was that worthy's comment by way of an answer to my question. After being informed that his education had been sadly neglected, he permitted me to go below to see the car tucked away at the back of a lot of modern tinware.

The unloading of the car was the cause of both anguish (on my part) and amusement (on my wife's part). To see a handful of Indian wharf labourers vainly trying to lift nearly two tons of motorcar has its amusing aspect, everyone giving orders to each other, accompanied by wildly gesticulating arms and remarks such as "it went in, so there must be a way to get it out!"

After what seemed an age, they managed to put her down on the quayside without any damage and we proceeded to Kuala Lumpur to register the car with the local authorities.

Here again we met with red tape interspersed with ignorance. "The import duty on *Italian* cars is 15 per cent. Sir!" (Oh no!) I am firmly convinced that the Licensing Clerk is still of the opinion that I pulled a fast one on him by insisting that the car was of British manufacture! Be that as it may he still fleeced me of a further £20 being Registration Fee *ad valorem*.

For the last six weeks all available hands have been on deck removing chrome preservative, grease, dirt, dust, etc. etc., in an effort to make her worthy

of the breed for an entry in the Malayan Vintage Car Register's annual Concours D'Elegance.

This was achieved but nearly did not materialise as I rather unwisely, I now think, decided to rewire the car without a wiring diagram! Many people thought I was crazy to attempt such a monumental feat on my own (I am now convinced that they were right). However, many curses, grazed knuckles, broken finger nails and four hundred feet of wiring later we switched on and apart from the horn button operating the dim and the dim switch being the cause of a revolting squeak from the horns, everything seems to have gone very well.

The car was duly entered in a quarter mile sprint and came second to a 4½-litre Bentley and walked away with first prize in the Concours. This then was the car's introduction to Malaya and I hope she will continue to grace the excellent roads of Malaya for many years to come.

(Report from 'Quack': American film company has leased Ron Armstrong's estate to make exciting film on, climax of which is Communist attack and burning down of manager's (Ron's) house. Still, he (Ron) says, maybe Lag will get bit part!).

R. ARMSTRONG.

Damansara Estate,  
Batu Tiga, Selangor,  
Malaya.

## Finger on the Starter

Running to the garage; quickly as I could.  
Finger on the starter.  
No good.

Pumping with the Ki-gass; set the throttle, so.  
Finger on the starter.  
No go.

Checking on the petrol; blowing through the jet.  
Finger on the starter.  
Not yet.

Taking all the plugs out; cleaning off the muck.  
Finger on the starter.  
No luck.

Draining out the water; hot could do the trick.  
Finger on the starter.  
No kick.

Careful of the battery; handle on instead.  
Swinging it for ages.  
Quite dead.

Switching on ignition; can you beat it, though?  
Finger on the starter.  
Whack oh!

ANON.

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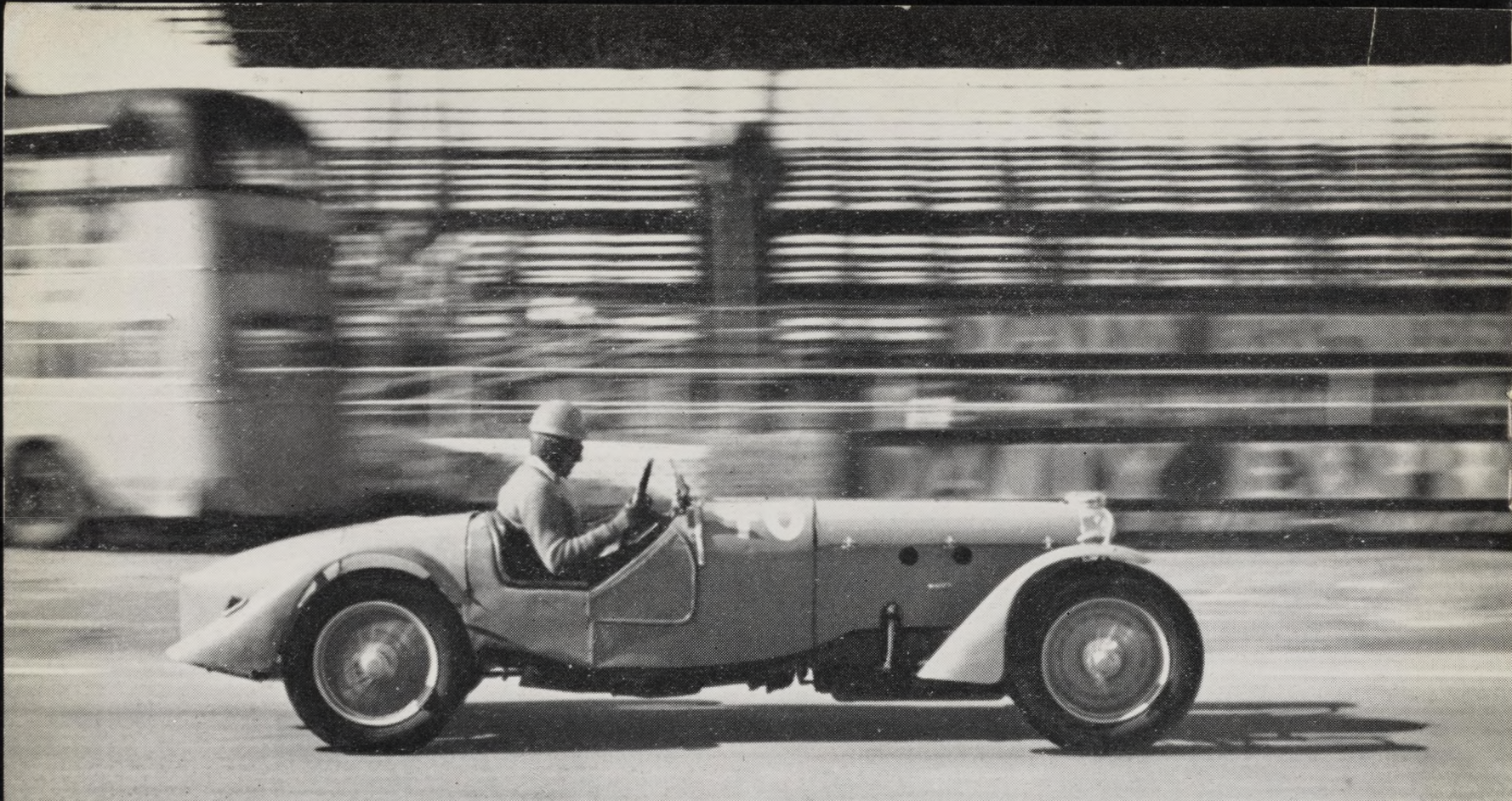
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Michael's L.G.45R

(Photo: JEREMY MASON)

## 1958 SILVERSTONE LAP TIMES

by Flarepath

I need not tell you it has been a pretty poor summer but apart from messing up your holiday it also upset the Lagonda races and not very interesting times were recorded at Silverstone.

But to continue the traditional racing review that comes along when you are sitting with your feet up in front of the fire. I thought you might like to see the fastest laps put up by the various models during the last three years or so when Lagondas first started competing at Club events in any numbers.

First let us set them down in a nice table for you to study and then we will talk about them.

Team & Special Cars	L. S. Michael	1m. 23.2s.
LG45 R	D. D. Overy	1m. 27.4s.
LG45 Saloons & Coupe's	R. P. F. Hare	1m. 40.4s.
M45 R	L. S. Michael	1m. 32.0s.
M45	R. Hill-Smith	1m. 36.2s.
M45 Saloons & Coupe's	D. White	1m. 38.0s.
3-litre	R. Newman	1m. 33.2s.
3-litre Saloons & Coupe's	C. Lyne	1m. 49.0s.
Rapier	M. H. Wilby	1m. 40.6s.
Rapier Saloons & Coupe's	J. C. Bugler	1m. 55.0s.
2-litre (supercharged)	R. S. Page	1m. 34.6s.
2-litre	J. Ayre	1m. 47.2s.
16/80	R. Paines	1m. 46.8s.
11.9	A. Audsley	2m. 21.2s.
3½-litre	F. Smith	1m. 41.4s.
Post War Saloons	Dr. Groome	1m. 51.2s.

Of these of course Bill Michael's time with the lowered and shortened 1936 LG45 R team car is the fastest but as he has got inside 1m. 24s. on no less than four occasions it wasn't because there was a strong wind down the straight!

Of the others in this group, Henry Dunleath and his "original" 1936 team car does around 1m. 25s. year in and year out and Jack Kibble's Le-Mans Winning M45 has managed 1m. 33s. on its only outing in his hands and no doubt will get a bit faster if the gear ratios aren't too high.

Now let us look at the normal models:—

### LG45 R

Donald Overy and the "Scarlet Woman" have been plugging away for some years at around 1m. 30s. with an occasional lap at something under to show there is no ill feeling. His fastest shows the effect of having someone to chase as this was recorded after a monumental "dive" with Mason's 4-litre Bentley. James Crocker has appeared with a LG45 R and twice managed something under 1m. 30s. so we can imagine them both going much quicker next season.

### LG45 Saloons, etc.

There is no doubt that there is rather a lot of this model to throw about at Silverstone and as most of them appear to be in the hands of members not interested in racing Richard Hare has carried on

alone. Both weather conditions and the number of competitors on the track effect the times of a car like this as it is not the quickest through the corners. To follow Richard when he is lopping at around 1m. 41s. is worth paying entertainment tax for!

#### **M45 R**

Strange as it may seem we haven't seen a M45 R on the track since 1954 when Bill Michael's rather non-standard one changed hands. With Girling brakes and more punch than the M45 it is reasonable to expect them to be that much faster but it seems likely that if standard examples of both were raced together there may not be more than 2 seconds per lap in it.

#### **M45**

Tony Loch has been the most persistent M45 conductor in recent years but as yet he hasn't been able to beat the time put up by Roddy Hill-Smith in the same car. It could be that at long last it is feeling its age, but more likely that Tony is more aware of the noise from the gearbox!

These cars seem to find about 1m. 37s. a comfortable lap speed, reaching I suppose 85 coming into Woodcote if they are lucky but already Ron Newman in his recently acquired M45 has managed something under this in the wet so I think next year may well see a new record holder!

#### **M45 Saloons**

Somehow in spite of their bulk this model seems to handle very well, if you forget Colin Lyne digging up a lot of cabbages at Copse one year!

It is a pity we do not see more of them out these days as during the year when Colin had his he lopped very regularly at 1m. 40s. or just under and the fact that Douglas White kept a garage may well have accounted for his slightly quicker time.

#### **3-Litre**

Since Doug Price departed for Africa Ron Newman has carried the flag alone, but to such good purpose that his times are far better than an M45. In fact now that Ron has changed to a 4½ it will be interesting to see if he can beat his 3-litre time.

Back in 1954 the 3-litres couldn't manage 1m. 45s. and the same car now modified to some extent comfortably beats that by 10 seconds a lap, time and time again.

The 1m. 33s. is really very fast indeed and one can see that record standing for a long time until somebody really gets down to it.

#### **3-Litre Saloons**

These must be perhaps the most unsuitable Lagonda to push round the Club circuit what with high brake pedal pressure and tons of coach work they haven't a very sporty feel.

This may be the reason that none have appeared for some years although they always received a sympathetic handicap and finished well up.

George Bussey and Colin Lyne possibly didn't hold my view on the handling qualities because they used to press on very hard indeed, in fact if you remember that their lap times were only 0.2 of a second apart you will probably agree that they were trying!

#### **Rapier**

With their excellent brakes and road holding these cars suit the Club circuit well although the lack of acceleration from only 1,100 c.c.'s of engine makes them a bit slow coming out of the corners.

Mike Wilby's 1m. 40.6 s. is a good deal faster than most others to date which shows how late we can really leave the braking when being pushed as this was achieved during a terrific "dice". Apart from this an average good Rapier time (including Mike) is 1m. 43s. to 1m. 45s. but Arthur Barnett threatens terrible things next year! It seems that a blown Rapier would be a very handy instrument!

#### **Rapier Saloons, etc.**

These of course suffer by being even more overweight than the tourers and the "top hamper" makes them far less pleasant on the corners.

Colin Bugler has been the fastest so far in 1m. 55s. which compares well with a lot of open 2-litres.

#### **2-Litres Supercharged**

Dick Page and Maurice Leo have been the mainstay of this section for many years and both recorded times of about 1m. 38s. which perhaps seems a little disappointing for a blown car until one remembers that they are geared rather more for touring than racing, and they are so overgeared that the maximum obtained on the short straight is about 75 m.p.h. The value of the blower coming out of the corners can thus be seen.

Recently Dick has returned the fastest ever time of 1m. 34.6s. but whether this was because of a following wind or smaller wheels isn't clear! Anyway lets hope he keeps it up next year.

#### **2-Litre**

As we all know 2-litres come up in all sorts of shapes and sizes and the times vary accordingly. You can have anything from under 1m. 50s. to over 2m. 00s., in the early 1m. 50s's is reasonable for most of this type.

Getaway was never the 2-litres strong point and this plus the high gearing keep the times down on this particular circuit to the figure mentioned.

There doesn't seem to be much in the handling qualities between the high chassis and the low and I suppose that brakes are about the same for all. With 2-litres a lot seems to depend on the individual car but of the four, who have got under 1m. 50s., Ayre, Green, Gostling and Long, the 1927 High Chassis of John Ayre is fastest by more than one second in 1m. 47.2s. a very remarkable time put up in his only appearance. Charles Green has a theory that 1m. 45s. is possible so next year will be worth watching!

#### **16/80**

Although of the same capacity the 16/80 by and large has been quicker than most 2-litres, due no doubt to the brisker acceleration, aided in some cases by a pre-selector gearbox. Although Richard Paine's fastest lap of 1m. 46.8s. doesn't look that much quicker than some of the 2's it was put up as long ago as 1954 and there is not much doubt that Roy O'Beirne will try very hard to beat this next

year, and with a season or so of experience behind him may well do so.

#### Of The Others

We haven't a great deal to go on. The 11.9 of the Audsleys has come out for "exhibition" runs and in Nancy's hands recorded 2m. 25.2s. so Alan not to be outdone replied with 2m. 21.2s. and when you consider the brakes, steering and age of this machine both these times are not so slow!

A 3½-litre has appeared only once which is more the pity because they should fit in quite well. It is possible that nowadays Francis Smiths' 1m. 41.4s. might well be beaten as George Sanders recorded a similar time in the V.S.C.C. Pomeroy Trophy which is supposed not to be a race!

The only post-war saloon we have seen is Dr. Groome's 2.6 and his 1m. 51.2s. has not suggested as a very "desperate effort". It would be interesting to see if the modern chassis design of the 2.6 or 2.9 together with its fine engine could make up for its bulk—forward Tom Dolman.

## CHRISTMAS DINNER - DANCE

This event which took place on January 17th was something quite new in the Club's calendar. It was intended to replace the Christmas party and to provide members with something to which they could bring guests who would not wish to spend the whole evening listening to talk of absence of oil pressure and the horrors of axle tramp. The Pavlovs Arms off Horseferry Road proved to be an excellent place for such an event. About 115 members and guests appeared, among who we were very glad to see Mr. Stirling of David Browns and also Mr. and Mrs. Fox. The weather was foul and it would not have been fair to ask how many came in Lagondas, though here and there a damp elbow or shoulder told its tale. There was some initial difficulty in recognizing people owing to tidy clothes and clean faces but when this had been overcome everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. After dinner there were a few speeches, the Chairman using his accustomed skill to choose as his subject anything which would enable him to work in his latest anecdotes. This was followed by the prize-giving: nice to see some new faces among those going up to the table to collect the trophies ranging from the Densham Trophy painting to ashtrays. Next there was dancing to the Local resident band (luckily nothing has come of the suggestion of a Club Skiffle Group and— even more horrible—a Club song) and there were several of those maddening games involving model cars and cotton reels which are great fun as long as you are not called upon to take part yourself. So, if you did not come this year, make a note of it for next year and come and see for yourself that your fellow members can after all behave almost like ordinary people even though most of them do own Lagondas.

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## Elliot Elder's Rapier

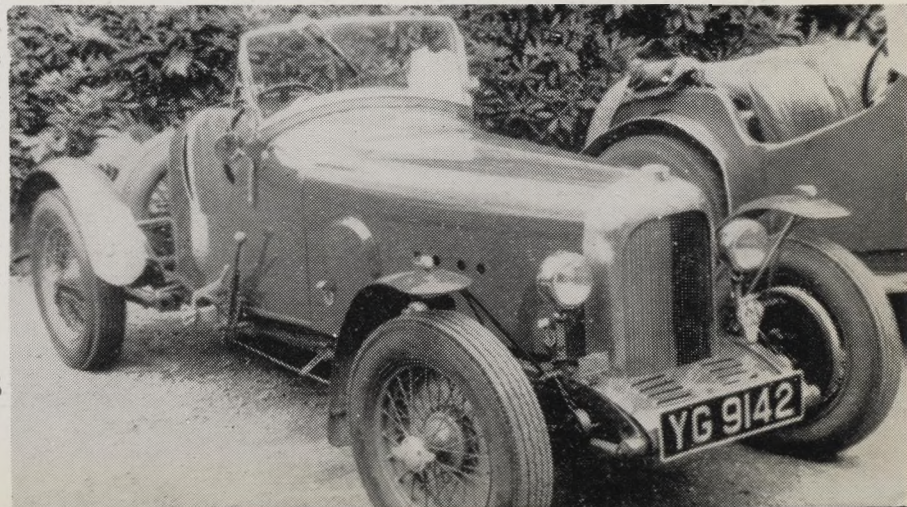
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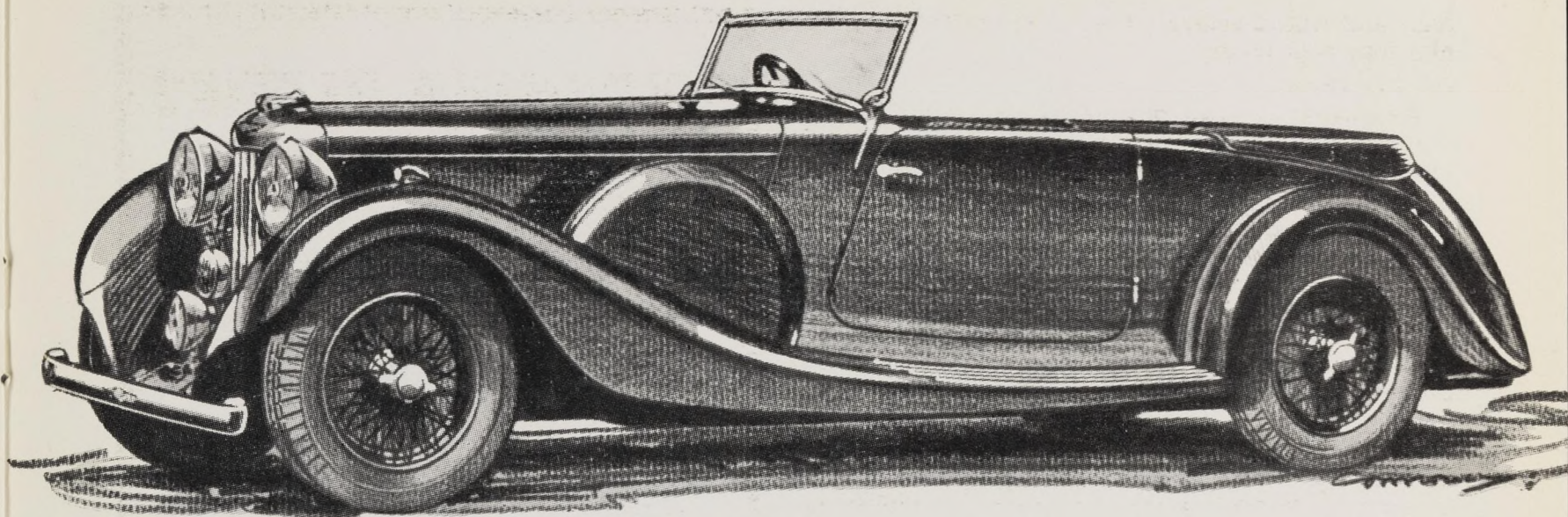
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"Quack" who took the photograph

says—"Most impressive and shakes  
the stoppings out of your teeth".





#### DATA FOR THE DRIVER

PRICE, with open tourer body, £1,000. Tax, £22 10s.  
 RATING: 29.13 h.p., six cylinders, o.h.v., 88.5 ×  
 120.6 mm., 4,453 c.c.

WEIGHT: without passengers, 35 cwt. 3 qr. 21 lb.  
 LB. (WEIGHT) PER C.C.: 0.90.

TYRE SIZE: 6.00 × 18in. on knock-off wire wheels.

LIGHTING SET: 12-volt. Automatic voltage control.

TANK CAPACITY: 20 gallons: fuel consumption,  
 16 m.p.g.

TURNING CIRCLE (L. and R.): 44ft. GROUND  
 CLEARANCE: 6in.

#### ACCELERATION

Overall gear ratios	From steady m.p.h. of		
	10 to 30	20 to 40	30 to 50
3.66 to 1	9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>5</sub> sec.	10 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>5</sub> sec.	10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>5</sub> sec.
4.76 to 1	7 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>5</sub> sec.	8 sec.	8 sec.
6.15 to 1	6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>5</sub> sec.	6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>5</sub> sec.	6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>5</sub> sec.
11.49 to 1	—	—	—

From rest to 50 m.p.h. through gears, 12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub> sec.

From rest to 60 m.p.h. through gears, 17<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> sec.

From rest to 70 m.p.h. through gears, 24 sec.

25 yards of 1 in 5 gradient from rest, 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> sec.

#### SPEED

	m.p.h.
Mean maximum timed speed over <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> mile	93.02
Best timed speed over <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> mile	96.77
Speeds obtainable on indirect gears—	
1st	28
2nd	54
3rd	73

Speed from rest up 1 in 5 Test Hill (on 1st  
 gear) 21.83

Performance figures for acceleration and maximum  
 speed are the means of several runs in opposite  
 directions.

## ROAD TEST L.G.45 Tourer

*Courtesy, 'Autocar'*

*The New Redesigned Model on the Road:  
 Great Improvement as Regards Quietness and  
 Comfort Has Been made.*

IT IS by no means easy to convey in a limited number of words the precise effect produced by an extensive trial over some 400 miles, covering all kinds of conditions, of the latest 4½-litre Lagonda. An independent observer who has been able to follow the development of the model over a period of years finds himself now in a very different machine—for the better from every normal and reasonable viewpoint. It will be remembered that last year this 4½-litre six-cylinder car went through a process of alteration and re-designing under the control of the new Lagonda Company, from which it has emerged as a very different machine.

The 4½-litre has always given a fine performance; in its latest form it provides all the performance that anyone can reasonably require, and at the same time has been silenced, smoothed out, and made a much

more comfortable car, so that in comparison with the earlier versions it is hardly recognisable upon first driving it. It can only be said that the appeal of the car has been considerably widened, for the people who to-day set store by noise and a harsh suspension are greatly outnumbered by those to whom refinement in a fast car is far more desirable.

There is certainly something exceedingly satisfactory about a big, powerful car of this type possessing a high maximum. Still better is one such as this new Lagonda, permitting a high speed to be maintained on suitable roads, which will take itself along with no real suggestion of there being an engine under the bonnet, with no bark from the exhaust pipe, and with a softness about the springing which prevents shock being felt over the less good surfaces even now not infrequently encountered. That is, provided, of course, that the suspension is also sufficiently firm to allow the car to be cornered steadily and to feel safe when travelling fast on the straight. These desirable qualities are present in the latest example: indeed, in a comparatively short time a great deal has been achieved.

It is the open tourer which has been tested, and an open car usually has an advantage as regards possible noise, both mechanical and coachwork. As to performance there is probably not any big difference in comparison with the saloon, for this tourer is by no means a lightweight, the body being a thoroughly solid, practical design with high sides and very comfortable seats, the occupants sitting well down inside the car. The lines are truly handsome and well balanced, too.

On a long main road run this machine is a joy to handle, with its fine acceleration and natural cruising speed anywhere up to about 75 m.p.h. Actually, the term cruising speed does not really mean very much—this car, for instance, can be driven as fast as any normally enterprising driver chooses and the road permits, without suggestion of stressing the engine. When swinging along up to 70 or so the sensation is almost

of gliding, so smooth and unobtrusive is the mechanism as a whole.

The top gear range is wonderfully good. It is possible to throttle down to less than 10 m.p.h., and quite practical to take right-angle turns without changing down, the engine picking up readily and with only the merest trace of pinking momentarily. Then only is there any definite feeling of the engine, though even so it is still far from being harsh or in any way unpleasant. The ignition control has been made more automatic, and the hand lever above the steering wheel is largely only an over-riding control, useful for very low speed work on top gear such as has been mentioned, but otherwise it can be left alone.

Slopes of the ordinary kind on main roads the car does not notice—they form, in fact, opportunities for really safe bursts of vivid acceleration. It is a fine thing to be climbing with the speedometer needle showing 70 or more. About 1 in 8 is the limit on top gear, but a hill with a maximum gradient of 1 in  $6\frac{1}{2}$  can be climbed on third, the speed dropping only a little below 30 m.p.h. Circumstances in which first gear would be needed must be few and far between except for restarting.

A quite good alternative method of handling the car in town is to drop straight to second when reduced to a crawl and to use that gear for accelerating up again, passing directly through into top afterwards, with a synchromesh change effective on the upward movement. The synchromesh is applied to third and top gears, and is of the best kind, almost lightning movements of the well-placed right-hand lever being possible, if desired, between the two gears in question. To engage second requires the usual judgment for a "plain" double-clutch change, but in practice that gear is seldom wanted, and usually only at low speed, when the engagement is entirely straightforward. Third and second are barely audible, and with the firm right-hand lever, working in a gate, it is a delightful gear change to use.

On Brooklands, when being timed to give the best speed shown in the data table, the

car attained a speedometer reading of approximately 105 (beyond the scale of calibrations), at roughly 4,050 r.p.m., with the main windscreen folded down and small screens available as extras for fitting at the sides as draught deflectors erected in front of the driver and passenger. With the main windscreen in position the speedometer did not exceed 101-102, and then the car achieved a best timed speed in the favourable direction of 95.74 m.p.h., and a mean of several readings at different points of 91.61 m.p.h. At 30 the instrument read slightly *slow*, at 50 was 1.75 m.p.h. fast, and at 60 was 2.6 m.p.h. fast. There was a passenger on board the car throughout the performance tests.

One of the most striking points arising in extended experience of this new Lagonda is that on a main road run it is possible to put 40 miles into an hour without exceeding 65 m.p.h., and with due respect for speed limits.

Girling pattern brakes are fitted, and these are exceedingly good. The operation is so light that hardly more than the weight of one's foot upon the pedal brings the speed down as required in the ordinary way, smoothly but with an unfailing power.

The steering has been made lighter and easier; it is now fairly low geared, though not unduly so,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  turns of the steering wheel giving full right lock from the left lock position, and rather less the other way. It has not become spongy or uncertain, retaining a nice degree of caster action, though the driver has no particularly definite feel of the front wheels when travelling fast. A small finger control on the steering column—similar to the mixture control for starting from cold—enables the hydraulic shock absorbers to be regulated whilst running.

In every way the driving position is admirable. The spring-spoked steering wheel is at just the right angle, not too low or too high, and through protected by the body sides the driver sits high enough to have an excellent view of the road. He can see both front wings. This car handles very well

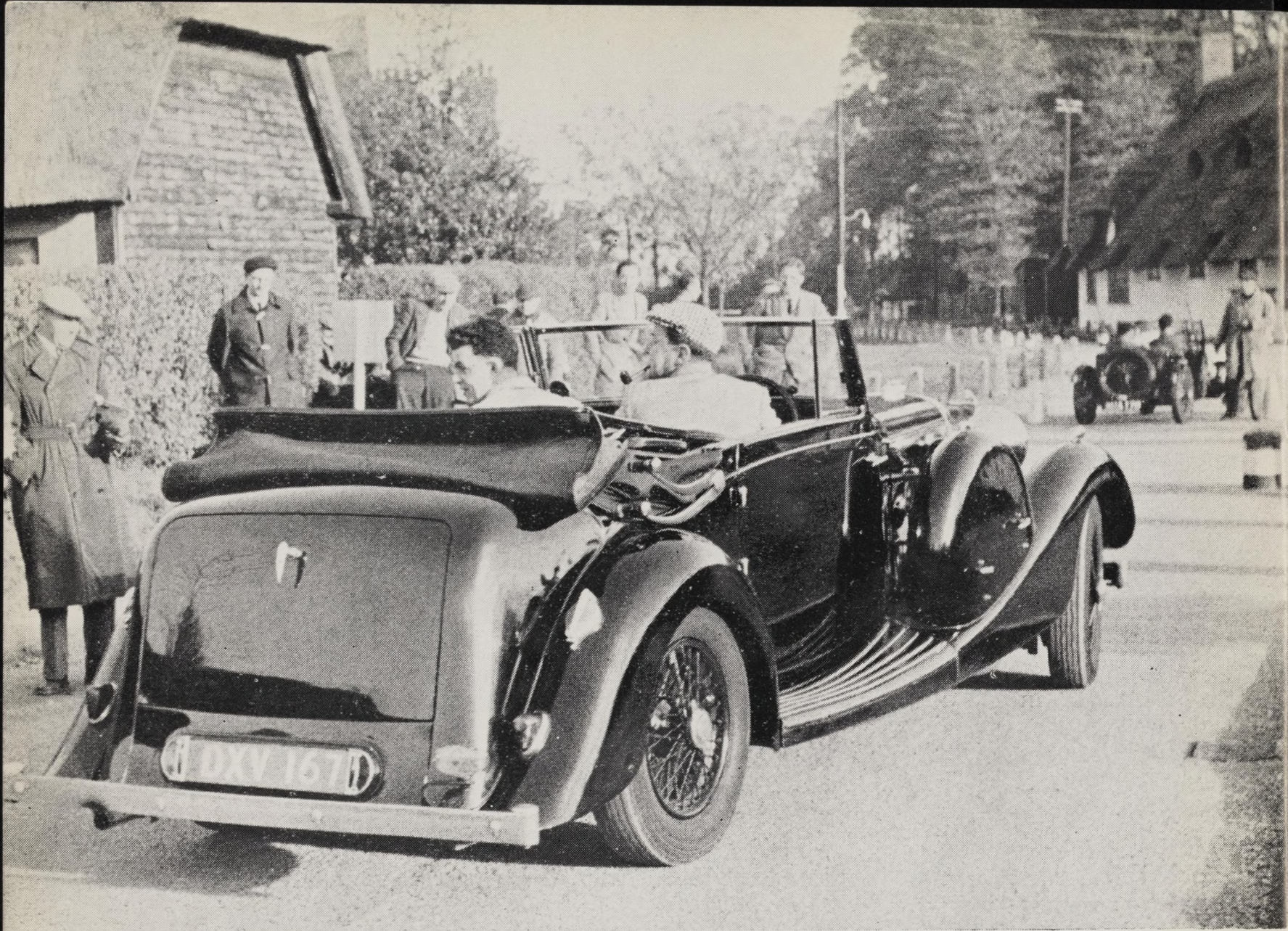
indeed, too, in traffic. A miniature driving mirror gives a comprehensive, though scaled down, view behind—at all events with the hood lowered.

Both front and back seats are extremely good, and there is a central folding arm rest in closed-car style for the rear passengers. There is a useful luggage locker in the tail, for which special suitcases are available, and the lid forms an additional platform.

There are many points of a practical nature: for instance, the placing of the control gear of the four-wheel hydraulic jacks, together with the tools, the knock-off wheel hammer, an inspection lamp, and spare sparking plugs, all accessibly in a dummy spare wheel cover on the near side. Then there are automatic chassis lubrication, dual magneto ignition, and quick-action filler caps for the radiator and petrol tank. The engine has a high finish. The oil filler is convenient, but the dipstick is a little awkward. One leaves this car with a very high opinion of its outstanding qualities.

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*Richard Hare's L.G.45*

*(Photo: JEREMY MASON)*

## COMPETITION NOTES *by Lepus*

The 1958 Competition Season has come and gone. It only remains for the successful to collect their silver on 17th January at our Dinner-Dance and as they are a different set of faces from last year it shows that everyone has a fair chance in club events. Careful preparation has paid dividends as ever. Joe Branson's Rapier is always well turned out. He took awards at the Sprint Meeting, Southern Rally (Driving Tests) and November (Night Navigation) Rally. Jack Kibble not only won awards at Silverstone and the November Rally but between these two was placed first in his class at the Concours d'Elegance with the Le Mans winning car.

Early in October the Bentley Drivers and Jaguar Drivers Clubs put on a 7-lap race for Lagondas. In the same wet conditions we have seen at all our Silverstone meetings this year, Submariner Whiteside drove the elderly 2-litre extremely well to hold off

Ron Newman in his "new" M.45. Ron was recording the best lap times yet seen from an M.45.

By contrast all our rallies were favoured with fine weather. Even the November event had sunshine during the afternoon, a clear starlit sky later on. Consequently most crews finished the afternoon route with clean sheets. Five came through the night section without loss of marks and they all did well in driving tests at Chipping Norton Airfield. Mike Wilby's skill and experience of this pastime with his Rapier a little off colour was not quite equal to Llewellyn in a rather special Bentley, but he wins the Committee Trophy none the less. Remaining awards went two each to Alvis, Bentley, Lagonda. Honour was satisfied all round.

We remember Lord Dunleath getting along incredibly rapidly in the fine vintage Humber to finish eighth; driving tests allegedly planned with an

M.45 tourer but with turns so tight that 4½ saloons or drop heads had to reverse to get round the pylons. (Organisers please note the tourer has a much smaller turning circle!)

In darkness the Tumulus and Roman Settlement country west of Cheltenham caused some difficulty. If your navigator tries to send you up a muddy cart track to the site of an old Abbey or Roman Villa bear in mind the strange fascination these things have for navigators, who should be resolutely ignored until the danger is past. Mrs. Wareham was gallantly operating a control in this area, alone on a farm road miles from civilisation. Much concerned, a competitor put two wheels in the ditch nearby so he was able to stay and protect her from the rigours of a November night. Having visited the Abbey ruins and reversed to and fro among the beech trees we came to a section sinisterly known to competitors as "The White Road". Here the navigator had to be suppressed when we came to a sign "Roman Villa" and the control was found a little farther on. Other cars could be seen going ever more slowly up the goat track to "Roman Villa". After that complicated tour in hilly Cotswold lanes things gradually got easier. A final dash down Roman Akeman Street to the last control left plenty of time to locate the marshal placed with cunning on the remote leg of a triangle.

Harry Wareham took on the whole organisation at a time when he had many business worries. We are grateful to him for providing an interesting day and to the marshals who travelled a long way to their tasks, especially Pat and Mike Bosworth, Dr. and Mrs. Rexford-Welch, Duncan Westall, Ian Sincock and the many other "Local Lads".

Looking forward to 1959 the dates are provisionally:

Sat. 18 April—Fuel Economy Rally.

Sun. 3 May—A.C./Lagonda Sprint Meeting (Brands Hatch).

Sat. 23 May—S. Rally (Driving Tests).

Sat. 6 June—8 Clubs, Silverstone.

Sat. 4 July—N. Rally (Driving Tests).

Sun. 13 Sept.—Social (Treasure Hunt).

Sun. 27 Sept.—A.G.M. and Concours d'Elegance.

Sat. 7 Nov.—November Rally.

The Fuel Economy Rally remains as planned for September, 1958, a run of 100 miles through Surrey and Sussex with fairly easy route finding and a few bonus marks for good m.p.g. figures, in relation to weight, so it should suit you all.

The Sprint was tried out in 1958. Two laps of the interesting small circuit at Brands Hatch with second runs and as much practice as you want, proved popular. We should like to see a lot more Lagondas now you all know in good time.

The Metropolitan Police Motor Club have invited our members to take part in their "Crows Feet Rally" on Saturday 28th February, 1959. There are many keen motorists who wear the blue uniform as anyone who has taken part in a Bentley Eastbourne

knows. The organisers have been seen in an M.45 and say the accent will be on brains and beer. To quote them—

"A Restricted Event starting at or near the Metropolitan Police Sports Club, Imber Court, Thames Ditton, and finishing there in time for a reasonable "noggin and natter" with an extension if need be.

As a gimmick we are keeping the route simple and the speeds down but the navigational problems (not tricks) will be such, we hope, as to tax to the maximum, the brains and ingenuity of your experts.

The route is over 75-80 miles of decent roads. We are also invited by the Cemian Motor Club to take part in their Coronation Rally on 25/26th April. This is an all night rally which has taken over from the former 8 Clubs, Eastbourne.

The Bentley Eastbourne is scheduled for 3/4 April, Firlie Hill Climb for September 6th on the day following the Brighton Speed Trials, and the Bentley Jaguar Silverstone for 4th October.

We want to continue our proud boast of always supporting invitation events with a good selection of Lagondas so for more information and regulations write to R. P. F. Hare, 137 Broxholm Road, London, S.E.27.

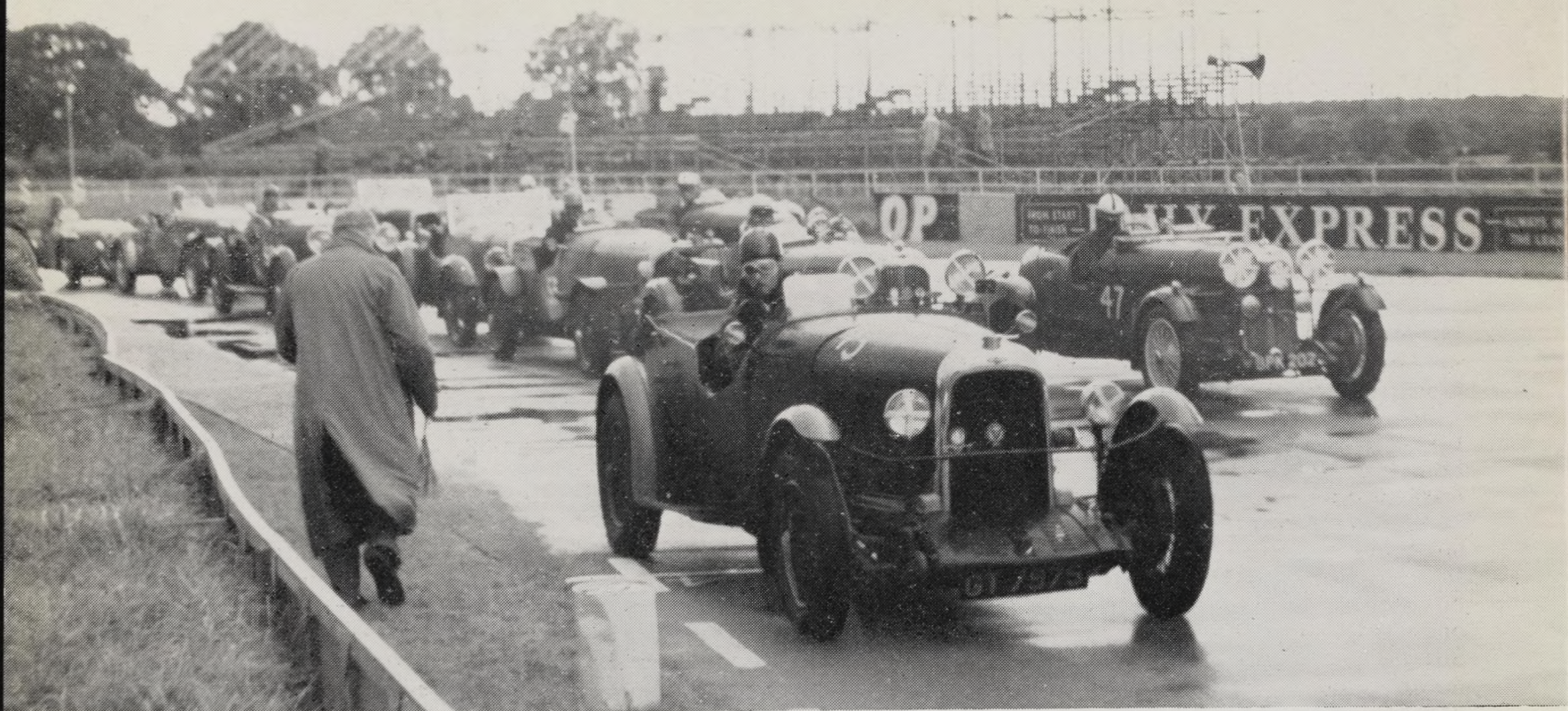


*The "Wet" Silverstone Meeting*

## **Bentley - Jaguar Silverstone**

Somewhat out of the blue the Club received an invitation to take part in this race meeting organised jointly by the Bentley and Jaguar Drivers Clubs and the temptation to have one more go before the end of the year was too good to miss.

The problem of getting a respectable entry so late in the year was a bit of a worry to the race sub-committee as so many of the regulars for one reason or another couldn't make it. However, by careful propaganda at the "Pub Meets", a couple of dashing 2-litre types in the shape of Robin Whiteside and Jerry Fisher-White thought they might have a "bash" and as the Competition Secretary, Richard Hare, said he had better take part on principle, the total entry of eleven did not look so bad after all.



*Line up at the last B.D.C. Silverstone Meeting*

Practice produced only a couple of surprises, the first when David Cumbers appeared holding a tow rope in his hands. The suggestion that there should be a car on the end was only too obvious when it was explained that his 2-litre had gone "blunk" about two miles down the road with what seemed like a broken piston. Jolly bad luck after coming all the way from Bristol, but friends were soon at hand and the car was recovered in time for poor David to watch others have their fun.

The second surprise was Ron Newman lapping his new M.45 tourer as fast as his old 3-litre which brought a crop of moans to the handicapper who was trying to have his lunch in peace. It was pointed out that he shouldn't be going as fast as that but as the soup was getting cold, it was decided that Ron should go back 10 seconds.

By the time the meeting started, the weather was as nasty as it could be, high wind, driving rain at intervals and a wet track, not the ideal conditions for high speed motoring.

As the cars come up to the line, the programme read:—

D. Overy	LG.45 R	Scratch
R. Hare	LG.45 Coupe	1 Lap + 0.10 secs.
R. Newman	M.45	0.30 secs.
A. Gostling	2-litre	1 Lap + 0.40 secs.
J. Fisher-White	2-litre	1 Lap + 0.50 secs.
A. Loch	M.45	0.55 secs.
I. Sincock	2-litre	1 Lap + 1.15 secs.
R. Whiteside	2-litre	1 Lap + 1.15 secs.
D. Cumbers	2-litre	1 Lap + 1.15 secs.
I. Howat	Rapier	1.35 secs.
A. Barnett	Rapier	1.35 secs.

The Rapiers lead away, as with the credit lap system, the limit men start further back, and it was obvious from their handicap that they were now paying for their fast laps earlier in the year. Nothing daunted, they pressed on with all speed and Arthur Barnett gradually drew away from Ian. A good effort this as Arthur had blown his own engine up at Firle and hurriedly borrowed another one for this meeting. Off went the limit men, the commentator drawing attention to the fact that Robin Whiteside and "Filthy Gladys" were getting the better of the duel with Sincock's high chassis car. One by one they sped away until the "Scarlet Woman" was left alone amongst the rain and the gloom. Soon Donald set off on the long chase and the race was under way. As the distance was seven laps, it was going to take some time for the field to close up and the conditions didn't make it any easier for the faster men.

By 3 laps it was still a 2-litre benefit with "Filthy Gladys" out in front and neatly spaced out behind him (or her) came Sincock and Fisher-White, his car looking very smart in spite of the weather. Ron Newman had already got by Tony Loch and then Ian Howat spun at Woodcote, trying just a bit too hard in the wet but, making a good recovery, didn't fall too far behind.

At five laps the back markers had now caught up and all were on the same lap although Overy still had a long way to go. Fisher-White upset the neat 2-litre formation by turning round coming out of Woodcote and in spite of rapidly pointing it in the right direction again, he was soon to lose third place to Newman who was demonstrating why he had to be re-handicapped. Barnett was now snapping at

the heels of the LG.45 coupe and finally nipped by, only to be re-passed shortly by a determined Richard.

Poor Harry Gostling having to stop at Becketts to fasten a loose bonnet decided sensibly there was no point to wearing the car out far behind the others and pulled into the paddock as the leader, still Robin Whiteside pressing on with great determination, came down to Woodcote for the last time.

Down the hill behind him came Sincock with Newman alongside and, although Ron closed quickly on the leading 2-litre, he couldn't do much about it with the finishing line just round the corner.

So they finished, Whiteside, Newman, Sincock, Loch next up and Fisher-White just holding off Donald Overy who, after a hard worked drive, finished 6th.

Nothing exciting could be expected in the way of lap times but Ron Newman's 1m. 36.8s. didn't look so bad in spite of everything and the "new" 2-litre boys can be well satisfied with the time recorded if one remembers that to have one's first race at Silverstone in the wet may be good experience but doesn't allow too much experimenting on the corners!

Here are the times:—

Overy	1m. 34.0s.
Hare	1m. 54.8s.
Newman	1m. 36.8s.
Loch	1m. 40.0s.
Fisher-White	1m. 55.8s.
Gostling	1m. 59.0s.
Sincock	2m. 00.8s.
Whiteside	1m. 57.6s.
Howat	1m. 52.8s.
Barnett	1m. 52.6s.

"FLAREPATH".

## ROAD TEST V-12 RAPIDE

Road and Track Classic Test No. 2, 1939 Lagonda Rapide

*Ed. Note: No road test of a V-12 Lagonda Rapide was ever actually published but several tests of the standard V-12 were available for reference. This is not a report on an actual test made by R & T, but rather is a synthesis of material published at the time the car was built.*

ANNOUNCED last year, the completely re-designed Lagonda line of cars includes also a new Rapide model, available with a choice of 4½ litre engines—either with 6 or with 12 cylinders.

This is a test report on the V-12 powered model which is slightly shorter in wheelbase than the six

and carries a special axle ratio of 4.27 instead of the 4.45 ratio supplied with other V-12 body styles. The curb weight of the new Rapide is very little less than the 4-passenger drophead and quite a great deal more (693 lb.) than the 1937 Rapide 2/4 passenger tourer. However the 30 added horses, combined with 26% more engine revolutions per mile give both fewer lbs./b.h.p. and a better high gear performance factor. Therefore it was not surprising to find that the V-12 Rapide performs slightly better than the earlier model. However we cannot say as much for the new 6-cylinder Rapide which, even though not tested, cannot begin to approach the "old" Rapide performance because of the considerable added weight.

The new type Rapide body is certainly a far cry from the traditional open-sports-tourer types and there is no denying that its comfort features are very nice to have. And when one feels so inclined, the windows disappear, the top folds neatly out of sight and the windscreen can even be folded forward. In this guise few people realize that this is not an open roadster body. While designed primarily as a 3-seater there is an additional seat which folds out and allows one adult fair comfort though facing 90° to the line of travel.

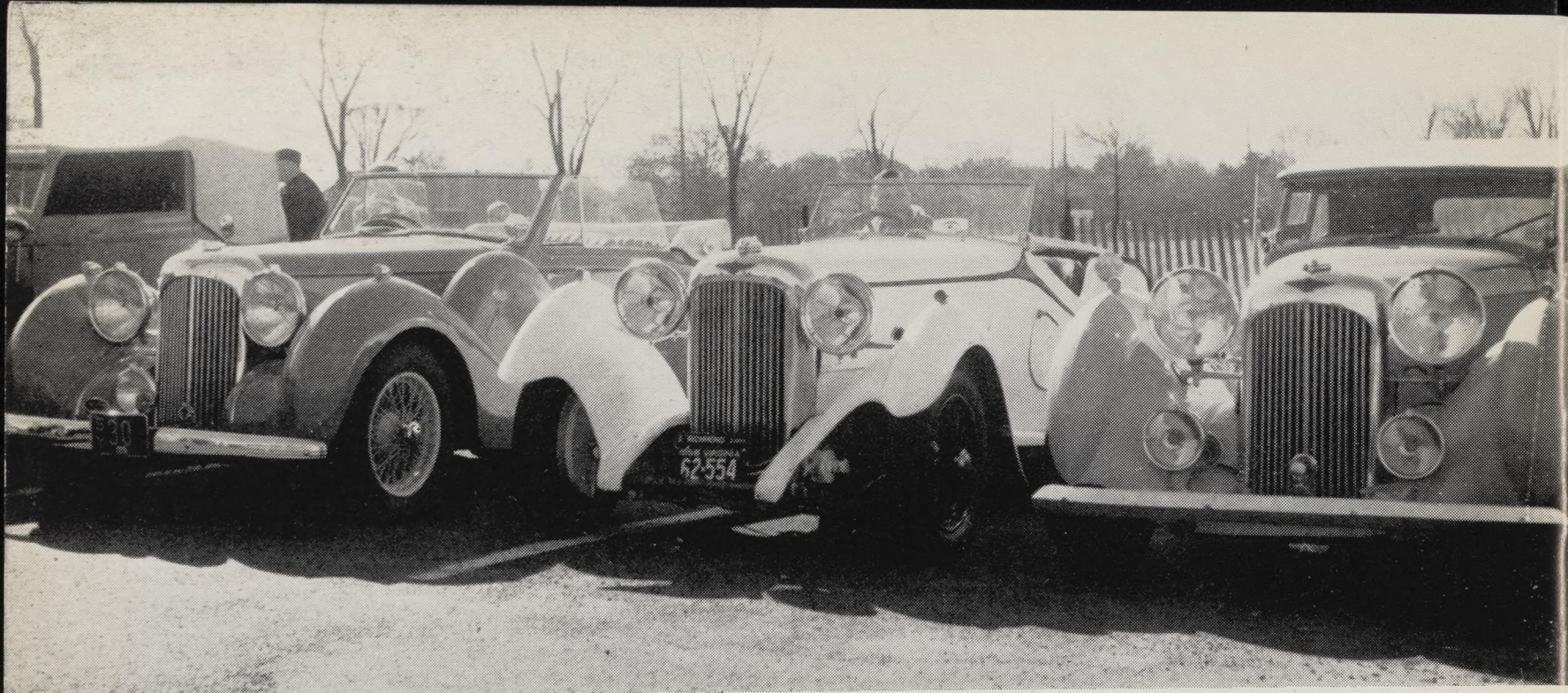
The new i.f.s. chassis is a revelation, giving as it does a really superb ride under all conditions and steering and roadholding which is without parallel in the luxury car field. The steering is not low geared (3½ turns) but is accurate at all speeds and parking effort is moderate. There is no trace of road wheel movement or road shock and the driver comes up to a fast corner, turns the wheel and the car goes around with consummate ease.

The tachometer is red-lined at 5,500 r.p.m. and speeds of up to 5,000 r.p.m. at any rate are attained with little or no sign of strain. Despite the axle ratio, pulling power at low speeds is not as impressive as the older cars—this engine is designed for high speeds and doesn't really come into its stride until 3,000 r.p.m. Nevertheless the V-12 engine is flexible enough to give a top gear range of from 10 to 110 m.p.h. Second gear is now synchronized and most drivers would use this ratio for slow speed trickling, with up to nearly 70 m.p.h. available for spurts, if desired. Obviously the short stroke engine is designed to be extremely flexible and despite the rather extreme axle ratio employed the theoretical cruising speed of this machine (see calculated data) is over 10 m.p.h. higher than the 1937 car.

Inevitably, the buyer pays for the additional weight and comfort features. The fuel consumption is no better than 10 m.p.g. if the car is used in a moderately vigorous fashion. Also the V-12 engine appears something of a beast to service and when it's all said and done we, somehow, are reluctant to admit that this is progress.

### BIRTH COLUMN—

JOEL BERNARD O'BEIRNE, born 14th October, 1958. (Busy studying the Highway Code).



## REPORT FROM AMERICA *by Bob Crane*

I hope you will understand the position of a chap who has been away and found a desk full of trouble upon his return. We did have a grand time in Europe this past Summer, but, what a mess to catch up on upon return!

We still talk of our very wonderful day with Bill Hartop and our other good Lagonda friends. It was a most enjoyable time to finally meet those whose names had become very familiar to me, but whom I had never met. I had never seen more than two Lagondas together at any time to date and then to find six or seven together was a real thrill.

I don't know how we can accomplish it, but if eventually all data pertaining to the various models were compiled, they would serve as a treasure chest of information for the new owner. I have had so many requests for data on bearing, piston ring clearances, etc., and etc. If we could get some of the knowledgeable members to produce articles, I would think that each would serve to form a part of a technical phase of a History of Lagondas.

Since we have been home, I have confined myself to just one thing beyond the office. Of course that was getting the Lagonda on the road again. It seems to me that poor Helen only saw me at dinner time. Every evening that was free of business I was in the cellar and garage. Of course the whole procedure was aimed toward November 8th and the Classic Car Football Game.

My car is now in one piece and the complete engine rebuild seems to be successful. I now have five hundred miles on the car and can cruise at 40 with some spurts to 50. It has terrific acceleration compared to the standard engine, and I believe

when I can take it up to 3,000 r.p.m. that the real power will come in.

This year, on November 9th, the Headquarters Region organized the get-together for the third time. Each year I have attended and have enjoyed myself so thoroughly that I decided to try for a group of Lagondas to join in.

Within striking distance of the game, I have about a dozen cars listed, but as is usual, most were either out of running condition, or their owners had previous engagements.

In the end we had three Lagondas. The first is owned by Dr. Douglas Rucker, who drove with his wife in an open L.G.45 Rapide from Richmond, Virginia, a distance of about 500 miles each way. He had to drive slowly, too, for he had just installed new rod and main bearings. Everything went fine until he was almost to Princeton, when his fuel pump went bad. He broke down only a few miles from the home of the second Lagonda who would be going to the game. An MG pump was jerry-rigged and got them to the game and back home.

The second car is owned by Gerald Roeser of Lahaska, Pennsylvania, and is an LG-6 Rapide tourer, Doug Rucker's being an LG-45 like Jim Crockers.

Finally, my own V-12 DHC which behaved beautifully after a complete engine rebuild. I think I told you I am running the Le Mans heads, cams and four carburetors from the third place 1939 car. The rest of the racing engine is unusable having been burst.

We gathered at 11 a.m. at a State Police Barracks outside Princeton and twenty three classics, (Rolls, Packards, Lincolns and Cadillacs) went in convoy

to a parking spot with police escort right outside our gate to the football stadium. Here we had a picnic lunch and then watched the Princeton-Harvard Football Game.

Afterwards, all retired to a nearby restaurant for dinner, and . . .

I must report that the three Lagondas were the centre of attention and admiration. But of course I am prejudiced. However, I do believe this was the first time when more than two Lagondas have ever been seen together in the U.S.A. Picture as proof.

My object shall now be to do a better promotion job for next year.

## NORTHERN NOTES

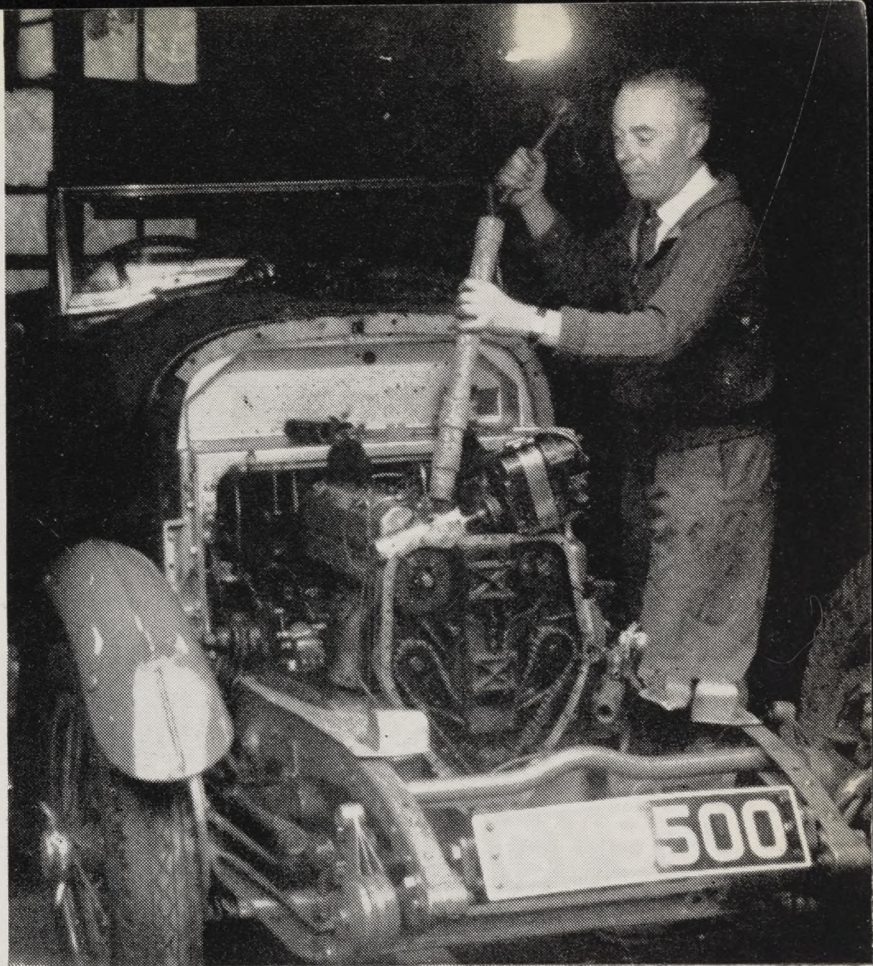
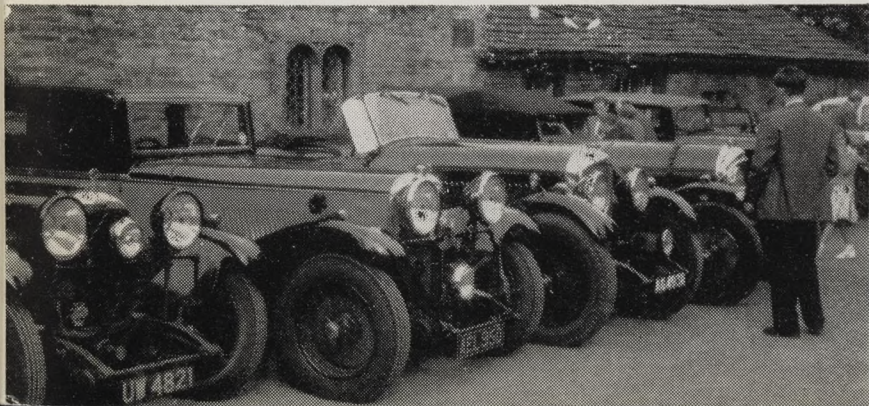
by Dearden-Briggs

Everything that has happened lately seems to have been a long time ago or a long way away—in the South. But elsewhere will be found a report on a very enjoyable Summery-Sunday-Social meeting, which was intended to gauge the amount of interest there is in a non-competitive meeting as a sort of family outing at which father gets the chance to talk motor-cars. The venue chosen ensured that there was something to see other than old motors and a setting to show off the same; and thanks to the enthusiasm of the people who sent out circulars and good weather, the idea was very well received—as much by the other Northern one-make clubs as our own. This is sufficiently encouraging for it to become an annual fixture with, next year, a Concours d'Elegance and a similar beauty spot to provide a background. Details of date and place will follow, when someone takes their finger out!

As one of the South's little functions, at Brimpton Grange, will be receiving ample coverage elsewhere, one will confine oneself to the observation that a considerable body of Northerners were to be seen there: one of their cars being so worth seeing that it came 3rd in the Radiator-Polishing Competition. This was the LG45 of North, about whom we promise a play upon words if he continues to hold up the North's end in this splendid way.

If, from your garage floor, you can look South towards a line drawn between the Lleyen peninsular

*Sunday Social Meeting at Shibden Hall, Halifax*  
(Photo: G. E. SUTHERLAND, F.R.P.S.)



*Northern member Bill Briggs adjusting the tappets on his re-built 2-litre*  
(Photo: DICK PAGE)

and the Wash you have a number of advantages over people who have to look North to see it: one of these is that for this Club's purposes you are A Northerner (though if you live anywhere near this line and show the faintest trace of enthusiasm you will be claimed by Harry Wareham to bolster-up the flagging Midlands). This title carries with it certain duties and privileges: one of the former is to read this column and one of the latter is the opportunity to compete for the Henry Coates Northern Trophy, which is the peg whereon all this lot hangs! As this is the first year that this has been awarded, its existence may have escaped many people's notice, thus making it a damn sight easier for those who keep their eyes open to win it. It will go to the Northern member, as defined above, who receives the largest number of points by the Club's marking system, for home and away competitions, and marshalling Lights should be removed from under bushels and claims sent in to Richard Hare at once.

Some people's attention is, at the moment, being given to next year's programme of Northern events and their locations; provisionally these will be as follows:—

10th April

**Dinner and Film Show:** Somewhere in the Leeds-Huddersfield area.

4th July.

**Northern Driving Tests:** Probably at Sandtoft, near Bawtry.

30th August.

**Sunday Social and Concours d'Elegance.**



*Scene at Brimpton Grange during the last A.G.M.*

*(Photo: JEREMY MASON)*

One regrets that more people cannot have events on their individual doorsteps, but in locating venues for such a large area attention has to be given to centres of Lagonda population—which means that there is a “pull” between Manchester and Leeds with a weak but well defined draw towards the mouth of the Humber and that some people from further North have to travel: this, fortunately, appears to be a not unpleasant proceeding in Lagonda motor-cars and a number of keen types have, in the past, been prepared to make the necessary journeys. One hopes they will continue to do so!

There is probably an old gypsy proverb to the effect that if you put one active bee into a hive of drones things will start to hum: but this is not borne out in the Scottish section, where two new members up there, of whom much was expected, seem to have become as atrophied as others in that quarter, and so far no meetings have become established there! However, enthusiasm for peculiar old motor-cars (and royalty-patronised modern ones) is still shown at the following monthly meetings:—

2nd Thursday: Red Lion, High Lane, near Stockport.

Last Tuesday: Half Moon, Skidby, near Hull.

### **Social Meeting**

Thanks to Bernard Raine's enthusiasm and hard work there were some 9 Lagonda motor-cars and rather more members at this first attempt at a non-competitive meeting on a Sunday afternoon, somewhere where mother could play with the kids on the grass while father leaned on a variety of motor-cars

and laid down the law about same. Other one-make Clubs had been invited and almost as long-felt a want appeared to be satisfied there, as we were almost outnumbered by the B——ys, and might well have been had we not counted Lagonda Club, and not radiator, badges.

Shibden Hall is a rather small, period manor house where, in the surrounding manorial buildings, the original equipment has been preserved and in some cases appeared to be still in use. The primitive nature of the engineers shop with its beam drill and jig for balancing coach-wheels made one a little less dis-satisfied with one's own equipment. The coach-house contained, apart from a number of staid 4-seaters, what, to this person's mind, was quite the most sporty ensemble ever made, in the shape of a 4 horse-power 2 seater, which made even the most sporting motors outside look a little overbodied. The brew house claimed a great deal of attention (these people were completely self-sufficient) and speculation was heard on the possibilities of a night on the Home-Brewed. And as though the rival attractions of old and very-old machinery were not enough, there were also donkeys, for the riding upon!

A semi-arranged feed followed at a nearby hotel and the intention had been to follow this with a pub meet but the need to see children to bed reduced the numbers there. However, the basic idea of such a social meeting seems to have been well-received and it is intended to make this a regular Northern fixture (as a sort of A.G.M.—less Brimpton Grange) at, next year, somewhere equally interesting with a larger car-park and probably a Concours d'Elegance.

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# CORRESPONDENCE

Sir,

## The Truth about Ken's Daring Drive.

Kenneth More did not use a Lagonda in "Doctor in the House"—he used a Bentley. There was indeed a Lagonda in the film, but it was a 3½-litre tourer, not an M45.

Apart from any technical difficulties of identity, the two Lagondas in "Doctor in the House" and "Raising a Riot" were superficially different. In the former the 3½ carried the spare wheel at the rear. In the latter the spare wheels were carried on the front wings if I remember correctly.

(The penultimate advertisement on page 24 of the Autumn 1958 issue refers.)

Yours sincerely,  
DENNIS STRATTON.

37 Belsize Square,  
N.W.3.  
16th Oct., 1958.

Dear Sir,

I am happy to report that the Read family is now patched up and back in circulation after our prang in the November Handicap; and I would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to all those who came to our assistance at the scene.

There are few disasters which do not leave us wiser for them, and this is no exception. Hence I am writing to all M45 owners, though fanciers of other models may be interested, that they may benefit from our experience.

First, the facts. We took a banked right hander leading over a bridge with three wheels free and the rear nearside one locked solid. It was therefore not surprising that the tail end made a race for it, went over the banking and engaged the parapet broadside on; leaving us and the car somewhat bent.

The cause of this sudden and complete locking of one wheel was soon established when the car was examined after our discharge from hospital. The combined effect of worn linings, wear in the mechanism and the provision of no proper stop on the adjuster had allowed the operating cam, under severe load, to go too far and jam the brake up solid.

These conditions, outlined above, may be found to exist on many of the cars in the Club; and I cannot stress too strongly the advisability of checking them before similar wheel locking, with its attendant risks, begins to occur.

Finally—anybody got any body spares for an M45 sports saloon with restyled near side!

Yours,  
JOHN M. READ.

204 Minshull New Road,  
Crewe,  
Cheshire.  
8th December, 1958.

Dear Sir,

I am told that a few years ago there was a 2-litre engine in the laboratories of the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham, that had been converted to diesel by, basically, replacing the plugs with injectors and putting the compression ratio up to 17 : 1.

Can anyone confirm this and supply further details?

Yours etc.,  
TONY LOCH.

Dear Tortoise,

Gudgeons, rings, paid newly, must in-be-run. Gently, therefore, burn road, Great North, two in morning. Fall musing; what noise that was! Wallopy, wallopy. Puzzling, very. All scratch. Ask friends. Michael charming, Tortoise hedging (ditching?) Ivan BRIMMING. Get knife, therefore, and steel. For laparotomy. All spread on floor. Gudgeons wobble. Ah so subtle. (Shake & shake the ketchup bottle; non'ell come, and then a lot'll.). But all now well, best of possible. Lagondas wonderful. 'Tis Wilbur's breedin' makes 'em so. Must have more, mostest. But will wife?

Yours contemporarily,

QUACK.

116 Hanover St.,  
Edinburgh 2,  
3rd Nov., 1958.

Cripes! And the man's within striking distance now!  
—Ed.

Sir,

The publication of Lucia's letter in the Autumn number had gone to her head and she has composed a comment on Lag Hag's complaint that appeared on Page No. 13 of that number.

I enclose this in case you might like to publish it and make her cylinder head more swollen than ever.

Yours obediently,  
MARTIN HUTCHINSON.

Blackboys,  
Goldrings Road,  
Oxshott, Surrey.  
10th December, 1958.

## ADDRESS TO A LADY ALIGHTING FROM A 2-LITRE

Just turn on your tummy and face to the rear  
And wiggle and waggle until you break clear,  
I admit in this method there's nothing that's new  
And that some that I wot of would take a stern view.  
Alternatively rise and administer clout  
To the driver who will promptly proceed to fall out.  
Your surroundings enlarged, you can powder your face  
And emerge in good trim, not a hair out of place.  
Why not ask your companion to give you a treat  
And provide a luxurious swivelling seat  
Not the built-in variety, which as you should know  
Is a patent applied for by Br—tte B—t.  
One last word of advice, why worry at all?  
I am sure you look charming in spite of it all.

Sir,

The November Handicap has come—and like my gearbox and water-pump—gone! Quite apart from the fact that I can now classify myself as an expert in driving without a third gear, the event proved to be great fun and in places most instructive—I know, now, just how slowly a Bentley can be driven and just how much of the lane they really do take up!

However, to the real reason for this letter! I have an axe to grind and a monumental “drip”—I can’t get my pillarless M.45 in and out of the pylons as fast as Mike gets his Rapier! Seriously, in such a rally as our November Handicap, where with a bit of experience and a certain lack of ill-luck, there is no reason why half a dozen or more should not complete the road section virtually “clean”. The final placings then rest entirely on the results of the driving tests and there it is that the small cars have a very definite advantage over the big ‘uns, and the “open” over the “closed”. Would it not be possible to work out some formula which would even things out a bit? I believe another club has managed it. I hope the experts will fight over this bone!

Thank you Mr. Wareham for a most enjoyable day, but where did you get the hearse with which you proved the day-light section?! And Mrs. Wareham—bless you for that chocolate!

Yours Sincerely,

R. C. MONTAGU.

Flat 4,  
8 Crystal Palace Park Rd.,  
London, S.E.26.  
24th November, 1958.

Dear Cur,

In common with all other 14/60 saloons I resent your calling us Ugly Ducklings. Surely you realise that Lagondas developed in reverse, the 14/60’s corresponding to the beautiful swan of the fairy tale, and the LG45 D.H.C. being rather more comparable with the ugly duckling.

I might make the point that although we occasionally do funny things like bending con. rods, we 14/60’s at least retain the full complement of four forward gears, unlike some I could mention.

Hoping that your block has not lifted completely off the crankcase.

Yours in anger,

MINERVA.

P.S. My owner, Peter Walshe, is muttering things about a tortoise that ought to turn turtle, is this an animal in the Lagonda Club Pets’ Corner?

5, Melrose Avenue,  
Cricklewood,  
London, N.W.2.  
25th November, 1958.

*Sorry to hear about your reverse, but after all it is a little unreasonable to expect that Lagondas would have persevered in the face of so many other difficulties merely in order to make you go backwards—not the best view of you in any case. A tortoise is a reptile of the family Testudinidae with a very hard shell.—Ed.*



*Peter Bartleet's 'Hip-bath' in the Pyrenees*

## Phrases from Forshaw

### Extracts from Letters to the Editor

“Paradoxical though it may appear, a car, like a human being, is loved as much for its vagaries and imperfections as for its virtues”.

“Thank you for your card. So you’ve been and gone and done it!” (Bought L.G.45) “It is a car with dignity, presence, and prestige, just the thing for a man determined to reach the Top of his Profession.”

“They (Morgans) seemed enormous fun at the time, but looking back I see that this was Hell in a Bucket; nothing I have seen of the four-wheeled cars would change my opinion, except that the Bucket has become a Bathtub”.

“I hope your peregrinations on Saturday ended successfully in the intended place”.

“We were delighted to read of your exploits in the November Handicap . . . knowing your capabilities and past record, I declared that, like the boxer, you had been robbed”.

“Your attitude, I take it, is that positively everything has now happened and that lightning never strikes twice in the same place. Do not deceive yourself, my friend; who should know better than you and I that the Lagonda is no ordinary motor and must not be judged by the standards of ordinary motors. I therefore respectfully draw attention to the telephone number as above and place myself at your disposal”.

## FOR SALE

**1936 L.G.45** Tourer, colour green, in first class condition all round. Have owned this car since 1936 and a sum well over four figures has been spent on it. £375 o.n.o. Cory, Simon's Cottage, St. Issey, Cornwall. Rumford 58.

**Lagonda** 2-litre low chassis tourer 1931 complete engine and front suspension overhaul last November 5 nearly new tyres. New brake linings and cables. Body very good condition. £225. S. J. Skurray, Browning Hill, Baughurst, Basingstoke.

**L.G.6** late '38 foursome drophead. Re-cellulosed Black and Grey, re-chromed, new hood, good tyres and battery. 19,000 since complete overhaul. Brakes re-lined. Heater, screen washers, twin fog lights. Brayheater Ride Control. Highest offer secures. Enderby, Swindon 2156.

**1933 16/80** Saloon, black, silver wheels. If your wife/girl friend complains about that open 2-litre this is your car. Purchaser will receive Certificate of Comfort signed by my wife. £175 for quick sale. Crocker, 15 Graham Terrace, S.W.1. (Man 8733—Office) (Slo 9429—Home).

**1935 M.45** Tourer, Green, bodywork good, engine completely re-conditioned three years ago, gearbox overhauled this year. This is the car used by Kenneth More in "Doctor in the House" and "Raising a Riot". Lemkow, 20 Wilton Row, S.W.1. Slo 4394.

**Wanted**—Klaxon windscreen wiper unit wanted complete. State of motor immaterial but mechanical side should be reasonably sound. Crocker, 15 Graham Terrace, S.W.1. (Man 8733—Office) (Slo 9420—Home).

**For Sale.**—G.10 gearbox (including lever) excellent condition £35. D. D. Overy, The Old Cottage, Bourne End, Boxmoor, Herts.

**1933 Lagonda 15.7 H.P.** Pillarless Saloon, running order, not taxed or insured. £85. Morrell, 6 Beechfield Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire. Phone Hulme Hall 47.

**1928 High Chassis 2-Litre S.M.** Sports Tourer. Excellent mechanics, rewired. Number 1 on register £185. Lewis, 29 Basingbourne Road, Fleet (395) Hants.

"I still have in my possession a set of four, nearly new, low compression pistons, complete with rings, for a blown 2-litre, to fit a bore of 2.8745 inches. If anyone is in need of these for his own use, *not for resale*, and would care to call for them here in his own Lagonda I would be glad to give them to him." Gillingham, "Greenacre", Fair Oak Lane, Oxshott, Surrey. (Oxshott 3151).

**Lagonda open 4½-litre Rapide** for sale, outside chrome exhausts, racing green in original cellulose, perfect fawn hood lined grey which disappears. Licensed 25/3/38. Car number 12277R engine no. LG45/185/S probably the last made. Two owners only and in my possession since June 1950. Genuine Mileage 30,000. Oil consumption negligible. Chromed Brake drums, chrome track rod, drop arms, drag link, front axle, engine pipes and levers. Polished sump and crankcase. New and larger film radiator stack which will not boil under any conditions.

*Everything works from radiator shutters to tank unit. Large Smiths' heater fitted with chromed piping. The car is as clean beneath as above. Excellent tyres and there are five new Goodyear Eagles extra. It has never been raced or damaged and is the centre of attraction in any company. Described by Mr. Collins, late Lagonda, as the finest of the 45 Rapides. Offers over four figures only.*

*H. Overstall, 203 Haslingden Old Road, Rawtenstall, Rossendale, Lancs.*

**1929 High Chassis v.d.p.** 2-litre. Work done includes chromard liners, new valves, guides, kingpins, carburettor, body frame overhaul, new p.v.c. fabric, etc. Over £350 spent. Stored three years. Needs small expenditure to make first class. Known defects will be pointed out to purchaser. On view at Messrs. Arnold and Comben, Farnham, Surrey. £130 including spares. Wing Commander J. H. S. Broughton.

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*(Tread design as illustrated)*

## SPORTS Nylon *(Tread design as illustrated)*

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